



GET FIT

**BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS TO A
HEALTHY LIFESTYLE**

DENIS JAMES

Get Fit!

Breaking Down Barriers to a Healthy Lifestyle

Denise James

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Introduction



Getting in shape is something we all want. Interestingly, we all know what we should do to lose weight, build muscle, and get fit—exercise regularly and eat right. However, we often get stuck in the process because we don't know where we should start. For most people, the decision to start exercising is the most difficult step for them to take; others start off quite easily but give up along the way. You might be reading this guide because you're one among the millions of people globally doing their best to lose weight (Ipsos, 2021). It should be made clear that worldwide obesity has tripled since the late 1970s. In 2016 alone, over 1.9 billion adults aged 18 and older were overweight. Over 650 million of these individuals were obese, according to the World Health Organization (2020).

A look at these numbers might give one the impression that people care less about their health and fitness. The increasing number of unhealthy concerns among people is a reason to question whether people are doing their best to exercise regularly and eat healthy foods that would improve their health in the long run. Between 2013 and 2016, over 49.1% of adults in the United States tried to lose weight. More women than men were motivated to lose weight (CDC, 2019). This proves the fact that people are indeed interested in living healthier lives by getting fit. So, why is it that people find it difficult to get fit?

Get Fit! is a comprehensive manual that will give you all the health and fitness answers you have been looking for. By using this guide, you will understand what you need to do to start getting into shape and living your best life. This book aims to simplify the whole process so that you find something that works for you. The reality of things is that there are tons of books out there that promise you quick results. However, most of the fitness manuals out there fail to deliver the promise that you will lose weight and get fit in the long run. Sure, you might get the quick results that you're after, but this is not a sustainable approach you will stick to over the long haul. Worse, you risk gaining all the weight you initially lost. Therefore, it's important to settle for a plan that guarantees you an easy way toward getting fit and living a healthier life without sacrificing too much.

Make this guide your best friend, and you will find no need to jump from one workout plan to another to achieve your health goals. This book aims to break down the whole process of getting fit for you. Before you start, worry less about signing up for the gym around the corner. Now is also not the time to get confused as to whether you should start with strength training, yoga, or cardio. Before anything else, it's imperative to understand why people find it difficult to lose weight and get fit. We will provide you with the necessary information regarding the stumbling blocks that might be preventing you from making progress.

Up until this point, we believe that there's a lot you have tried to help you get fit and live a better life. Perhaps you have been

a victim of body shaming, or you're just not happy with how your body looks. Maybe you're looking to get fit due to health reasons. Whatever reasons you may have in mind, the most important thing to remember is that the foundation to your health and well-being hinges on building and cementing the right habits. It doesn't matter whether you're a beginner or a pro-trainer trying to get back in shape. By developing the right habits that stick, you can be sure to achieve your health goals in time.

The best thing about getting fit is that you don't have to be an experienced athlete to reap the benefits of exercising, eating right, or following a healthy regimen. If you start working out today, you can be sure to feel relaxed and motivated to attend to your daily activities. The perks of exercising are almost felt immediately after working out. After a quick jog, you may want to take a shower, or nap for a few minutes before working on other important things in your to-do list. The point here is that getting fit gives you a reason to start enjoying life once again. You will be more productive in life. The best part is that people will start admiring your commitment to your health goals, which would be another reason to keep going and impress the small world around you. We all know how good it feels when we are continuously complimented for the good work we are doing.

As you think about the best approach you will take to get in shape, what is the motivation behind your decision? Why do you think you should work hard toward getting fit and healthier in the process? The biggest challenge toward ultimate health and fitness is in your mind. While some of the exercises and the meal plans detailed in this guide are easy to follow, your mind will often play games on you. Oftentimes, the mind will stop you in your tracks. Maybe you wanted to go for a jog, but the mind will hold you back, giving you all sorts of excuses why you don't need to go for that morning or afternoon jog. You will start to think that you're tired, you'll do it tomorrow, you have a busy schedule, or that your friends will think you're crazy. All these are some of the excuses we often come up with not to stick to our exercise routines.

Your mindset should be in line with your health goals. You can't be thinking negatively about yourself and expect to maintain the right attitude toward getting in shape. Your fitness motivation should fuel you to keep working hard even when things seem impossible. In other words, your reasons "why" should be motivating enough to get your butt off the couch even when you don't feel like exercising. At the end of the day, the more you keep focusing on doing the right thing, the more likely you will accomplish your fitness goals.

Think about it: Getting fit is all rooted in the healthy habits that you create every day. Just stick to a simple exercise routine, eat right, drink plenty of water, and get enough sleep. If this is something you can stick to in the long run, there's no doubt that you will motivate many that getting fit doesn't have to be a complicated process with grueling workouts and overly restrictive diets.

Another important thing to keep in mind is that you might find it easy to plan the whole idea of getting fit, but the implementation process is the most important. Failure to take action on your goals only renders your goals useless. Your dreams to get that rocking body you have been thinking of will only remain nothing but dreams. Therefore, it's vital that you commit yourself every day to taking action toward your health goals. This means hitting the gym regularly or doing your best to choose healthier food options that help you move an inch closer to your health goals.

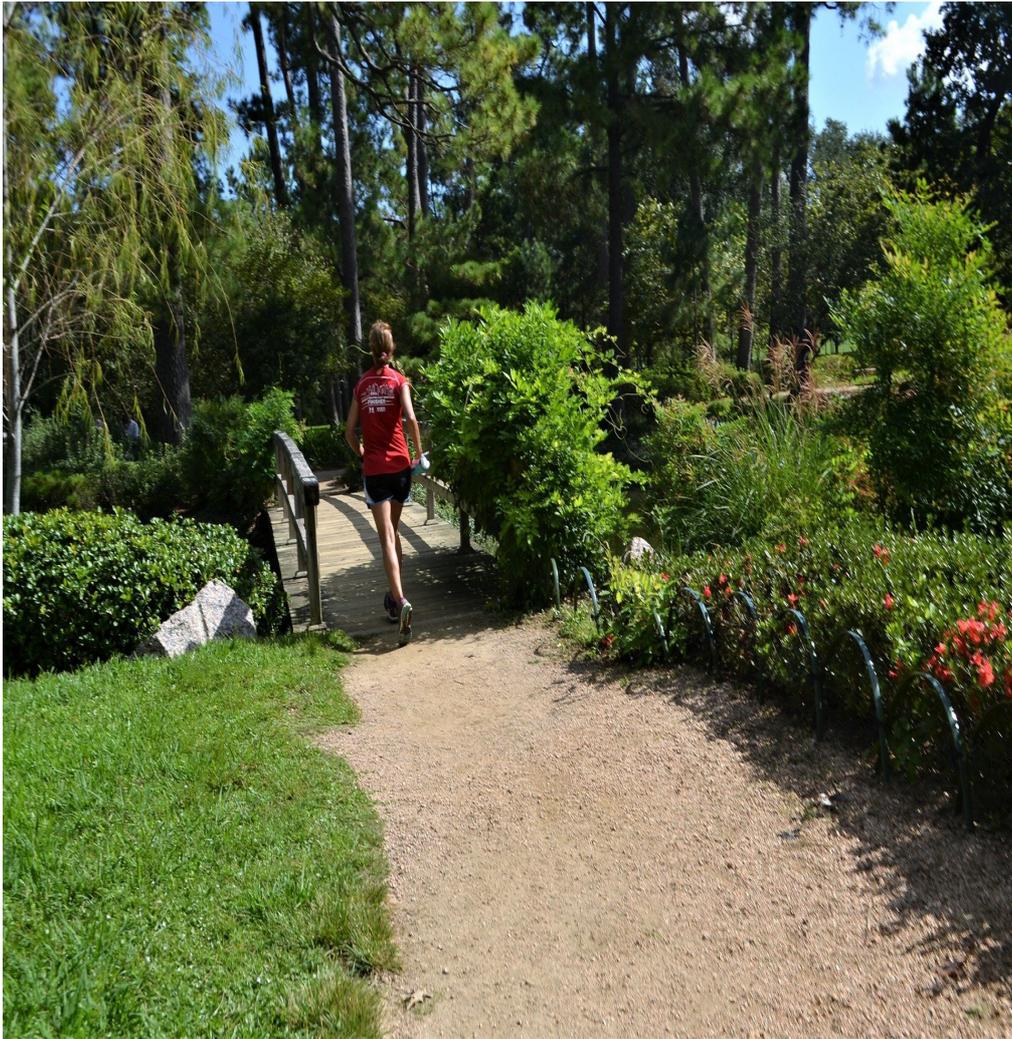
Challenges are part of the process, and failure should be your best friend. As you take on this journey to getting fit, expect to slip up. It might get to a point where you feel like your body can't take it any longer. The truth is that we all have these breaking points in the facets of our lives. Instead of adopting an all-or-nothing approach, cut yourself some slack. You need to realize that it's part of human nature to veer off course sometimes. When you get to a point where you think all your efforts are in vain, don't throw the fitness routine or the nutrition plan out the window. How many times will you have to do this? Decide to dust yourself and get back on the horse again. Give life your best shot and keep doing the thing that will eventually get you the results you're after.

Let's begin!

Chapter 1: Forget What You Think You Know About Getting Fit

“With consistency, we become one step closer to our dreams
and while witnessing small victories on the way!”

— Purvi Raniga (Goodreads, n.d.-a).



New Year's is a great time for us to set goals and work toward them. Most Americans resolve to work harder to accomplish their goals. Suddenly, some of the streets that were once barren are full of joggers. Indeed, the beginning of a new year presents us with an excellent opportunity to start over. Besides exercising, we also make healthier food choices. We choose to restock our fridges with fresh and whole foods. Getting fit seems possible at the time, and losing weight is part of the main goal that we focus on.

However, in spite of our commitments, our motivation quickly fades away, and we are back where we started. Things get tougher, and we soon realize that getting fit might take longer than we expected. So what do we do? We start giving excuses why we can't exercise. Most people will claim that they lack time, while others will indicate that they are not as motivated. Sometimes the fitness advice that we follow is what prevents us from actually realizing our goals. We fall prey to the

misconceptions that have flooded the Internet, thinking that the fitness approaches will work but they rarely do.

There is nothing complicated about getting fit and living a healthier lifestyle. In fact, most of the people who succeed in the process are those who commit themselves to simplifying the whole process. This means that the first step you need to take to get lean and muscular is to forget what you know about getting fit. By doing this, you're better placed to adjust to a more flexible approach that will ensure you achieve your health goals.

Arguably, this is what the multibillion diet and weight loss industry fails to inform people. The diet and weight loss market has grown to worth over \$72 billion, and the interesting fact is that 95% of these diets fail (Business Wire, 2019). Most individuals turn to these diets and other fitness apps forgetting the fact that people are out to make money. What this means is that settling for highly restrictive diets won't get you the results you're after. Additionally, grueling workouts also don't guarantee that you will get leaner and stronger.

By equal measure, clean eating is also not the answer to sustainable weight loss or building muscle as you might desire. The idea of dieting promises to deliver, but we often forget that dieting only drives us to work against our bodies. Instead, you should find the right eating plan that ensures your body helps you achieve your goals. For instance, restricting your body from fat might seem to be a good idea, but the body also needs fat to function optionally. The same case applies to carbs and other vital nutrients. For a leaner body, it means that you need to find a balance of these foods and provide the body with what it needs to function at its best. The worst thing about dieting is that it can be overly restrictive to the point where you find yourself engaging in yo-yo dieting—this is where you lose weight and later regain it again before choosing to try another diet (Thorpe, 2017).

The many misconceptions that have flooded the Internet about getting fit might derail you from achieving your health goals. Sure, what you choose to believe might be true, and it might

help you lose weight and get fit. However, in most cases, the diet plans and the workout regimens people recommend rarely work. It is for this reason that millions of people continue to suffer because of misinformation. They fail to understand that there is no one-size-fits-all approach when it comes to getting leaner and stronger. The approach you use might not work for someone else. The way your body functions and how it responds to different foods and exercises varies considerably. Therefore, you shouldn't be fooled to believe that certain plans will work. It all boils down to understanding how your body responds and how to work with it and not against it.

That said, getting leaner does not mean that you should spend countless hours in the gym or buying the best supplements lauded in the market. The idea here is that what you choose to believe regarding your health goals will deter you from achieving the lean body you have always been dreaming of. The worst thing is that the moment you fail, you might start blaming yourself and not the diets or the workout programs you have been using. This is what most people do after failing in their attempts to get fit. They tend to think that they were not as committed or that they did not follow the workout plan as required. The brutal truth is that what you choose to believe might be a lie or a myth. So, decide to start on a fresh page and focus on what works for you. This guide will take you through the simplest approach to getting leaner and stronger.

Don't Believe the Hype

The advent of the Internet has made it easier to access information more now than ever before. People can easily get answers about their concerns at the touch of a button. The convenience the Internet offers has influenced most individuals to trust the information they come across over the Internet. Before stumbling on this guide, chances are that you accessed the Internet to get reliable answers to your health and fitness concerns. Indeed, this is what most of us do. We can't really blame ourselves for relying heavily on the Internet, but we should be wary of what we choose to believe as true.

The media, especially TV and offline publications such as magazines, provide us with diet and fitness advice that we often assume to be true. The problem is we ultimately fail to recognize that the different forms of publications are out to sell information. We are often bombarded with information pushing us to click and subscribe to the latest releases. We are lured to think that the new information presented to us might be the magic bullet to get us the results we are after.

It's time to wake up to the realization that you're smarter. You deserve better, and it's high time you quit buying into the garbage from different media sources. If you're keen enough to the word choices on most of the ads you come across, you will realize that they are just out to sell. For instance, advertisers understand that most men want to get six-pack abs. So, an ad would feature phrases such as, "secret to six-pack abs," "chiseled six-pack abs fast," and so on. Evidently, the word choice is intended to give you a reason to think about trying the proposed workout plans or dieting options. Does this mean there is a secret to getting fit or toning your body?

Overall, the truth is that there is no magic bullet. There is no secret that the diet and weight loss industry is keeping from you. In fact, the only secret they are keeping from you is that your body is different, and this means you might not get the six-pack you're after. Biologically speaking, using the same workouts your friend or trainer uses might not get you the same results you're thinking of. Genetics play a crucial role in determining how your body responds to food and exercise.

The diet and fitness information we get from different sources is nothing but confusing. We are never sure about what we should do to lose weight and live healthier lifestyles. Marketers in this industry have found a way to get people hooked. They lure us with new tricks to lose weight fast, unfounded research breakthroughs, training techniques, and the like. At the end of the day, we conclude that there could be something worth trying about the new approaches that have been introduced in the market. After all, what we have been doing hasn't worked, so it's easy for us to be fooled. We keep jumping from one approach to the other, and the worst thing is

that nothing seems to work to our advantage. Do you see why the diet and weight loss industry is a booming business?

When you come across publications claiming that fat is bad or that salt causes heart disease, you shouldn't be fooled. Fat is part of a healthy diet, and salt might not be the reason why you risk suffering from heart disease; instead, sugar should be your major concern. Nutrition is a young science, and this means that there are a lot of theories that scientists will come up with. You shouldn't give up on the importance of knowing what is right and determining what works for you. The most important step is to take a stand and weed out all of the noise. Simplify the process by sticking to an ideal strategy that does not make you feel like there is a lot you need to sacrifice.

It's okay to assume that the food companies have a special interest in ensuring you eat healthy and nutritious foods, but the truth is that they are out to make profits. Marketers are there to scare you from eating bread and at the same time telling you that gluten-free, sugar-free, and dairy-free cookies are "all natural" and nutritious. This is just a marketing strategy they use to confuse you. You skip on bread and turn to sugar-laden foods thinking that they will provide your bodies with extra energy to exercise and burn more calories. Well, we are not out to wage war on advertising industries, but this is a special reminder that you need to be wary of the information you consume, especially in regard to your health.

The next time you come across foods labeled as "natural," it does not mean that they are 100% natural. Other labels like dairy-free or gluten-free don't necessarily mean that they are healthy. Experimenting with your diet might help you cut back on some foods that don't work with your body. However, this also does not mean that these foods should be labeled as "bad."

Another thing is that if something sounds too good to be true, it probably is. Think about it—if there was a secret to getting six-pack abs in one week, wouldn't this be something that would have been out already? Brands don't sell their weight loss products by reminding you that our bodies respond differently or that optimal health is a personal approach.

Just because a certain celebrity endorses a specific supplement doesn't mean that it's different from the rest in the market. Chances are that they might not even be using it. Has this ever crossed your mind? Settle for diet and fitness approaches that allow you to listen to your body. The good thing about these strategies is that they can help you in the long run, compared to quick fixes that promise to deliver results fast.

Generally, being mindful of what you eat, how you eat, and when you eat is the best way to eat right. The same goes to the workout routines that you choose to incorporate in your program. Living mindfully helps you to discern what works and what doesn't. This also means weeding out what you already know about diet and fitness. Change your habits, and you will change your life for good. It's that simple. Use the recommended tips provided herein to start your journey to getting leaner with an open mind.

Chapter 2: Barriers to Fitness: Overcoming Common Challenges Men and Women Face

Getting leaner is surely one of the main goals that most people have, especially now that statistics indicate there are many rising obesity cases in the United States (WHO, 2020). It's part of everyone's goal to live a happy and healthier life. However, the biggest problem most people face is that they don't know exactly what to do. Many people have tried their best to lose weight and get fit, but most of them have not succeeded in the process. The restrictive diets they thought would help shed off some pounds fail to deliver. The same case applies to the debilitating workouts that they incorporate into their routines. Before you know it, you're out wondering whether exercise is for you or that there is something else you can do to get fit.

We've all been there. If you have tried working out before, you understand how it feels when you don't know what to do because nothing seems to work. Checking the numbers on the scale is even scarier because instead of losing weight, you're putting on more. The failures you go through while trying to get fit might also drive you to compare yourself to the people around you. Some folks don't need to exercise to maintain lean bodies. You may start to wonder how some people don't put on weight, and they eat more food and rarely exercise. These are emotional concerns that often leave us with many unanswered questions about our overall health and fitness.

The good news is that you're reading this book with a renewed sense of hope. Deep inside, something tells you that you can still do it. You can get fit. You only need to try one more time, and you will achieve your goals. Guess what? You're right.

Before taking you through some of the best workout routines that will ensure you feel that you're making progress, let's

consider some of the stumbling blocks you need to get out of the way. Admittedly, to get to your destination, it's important to identify some of the challenges you will come across along the way. With the right information to keep you going, there is no doubt that you will be motivated to accomplish your goal irrespective of the barriers you meet.

Breaking Down Common Barriers to Fitness

The barriers to fitness that will be discussed in this section are common, everyday challenges that deter us from engaging in physical activity or even choosing healthier foods. We all are victims of procrastination; we tend to think that we lack time to exercise. Family obligations and the realities of life also get in the way, and we forget the very basic reason why we started exercising in the first place.

You might have good intentions to get fit and healthier, but some of the hindrances that will be discussed herein prevent you from achieving your goals. To ensure you start your fitness journey on the right foot, let's identify some of these barriers and how to overcome them.

Lack of Time



One of the main excuses people give for their failure to exercise is that they lack time, but the interesting thing is that physically inactive individuals have plenty of free time just like anyone else. It's possible to enjoy an outstanding, healthy life if you want to. However, you need to make time for it. It doesn't matter whether you're a busy executive, a mother with young kids, a student, or a pilot. The first step to taking action on your goals demands that you should decide exactly what you want.

There are a couple of reasons why you might claim that you lack time. Perhaps you haven't thought about the importance of exercise in your life. In this regard, it might be difficult for you to start incorporating it in your lifestyle. Irrespective of the reasons you might have in mind, it all comes down to how well you manage your time.

You might be concerned about what you need to do to make the desired changes and start exercising. The good thing is that there are many ways of keeping your body active without having to hit the gym. Most individuals would assume that the only way of getting fit is by working out in the gym, so when they have no time to drive to the gym after work, it becomes an excuse.

Exercise can easily be incorporated in your daily life by taking simple actions that keep your body on the move and your heart

pumping. For instance, taking the stairs, walking during your lunch hour break, parking the farthest from your office, or even taking the long call while standing. The first step is always the most difficult step to take. Once you make up your mind to walk down this road, everything else will fall into place. Keep in mind that over time you develop the right habits that make it easier for you to enjoy exercising and keeping your body fit. Eventually, you will accomplish your health goals.

To help you get started, consider the following tips.

Commit Yourself to Your Goal

At the beginning of a new fitness routine, everything might seem confusing. It might be daunting for you to determine how you will start or even how you will find time to work out. However, it's imperative that you commit yourself to the goal you've set for yourself. You don't have to take the big leap right away. In fact, the best approach when starting out is to take small baby steps. Tell yourself that you're ready to make small changes every day for the next few weeks. Set small, realistic, achievable, and time-bound goals. Plan to engage in short exercises that will get your heart rate pumping for the first few weeks.

Start with simple exercises such as walking, jogging, swimming, body weight exercises, and other types of exercises that don't require a lot of planning. Bear in mind that the last thing you need is to feel that you're burdened with the workout programs you use, so it's best to settle for simple routines that work. Later, you can enroll for gym classes once you're certain that you've established some sort of routine. By doing this, you will not only notice a change in how your body looks but your mindset will also change. It will be easy for you to follow a routine without allowing distractions to get in the way.

Find an Accountability Partner

Most individuals who stay committed toward their health goals have accountability partners. By exercising in groups, it's easy for them to follow up on their goals and take action.

Getting fit is important to you, and thus, you shouldn't hesitate to find an accountability partner. Talk to your friend about joining you as you follow the recommendations provided in this guide to get leaner & healthier. If you think this is difficult for you, join social media groups and talk to other people who have similar goals. You never know, you might end up motivating someone who is in dire need of physical transformation.

An accountability partner will motivate you, especially in times when you don't feel like exercising. When you think of giving excuses, your partner will push you to show up and push your body and mind to take action on your goals. Arguably, sometimes all you need is a little push in the right direction.

Short or Express Workouts

The "lack of time" excuse can also be solved by relying on short or express workouts. You don't have to exercise for one or two hours for you to reap the benefits of exercising. Short exercises are fun, engaging, and very effective when done properly and consistently. More about these short exercises will be discussed later in this guide.

Lack of Motivation

This is a big one!

Most people want to get lean and strong, but the lack of motivation stops them from reaching their goals. Even those who start with a lot of enthusiasm lose their motivation after a few weeks or months. The truth is that no one can always be motivated to exercise, not even the fittest individuals. There are those days when they can't get themselves to exercise. The lack of motivation is a common issue to most people, and understanding how to overcome this challenge is of great importance.

There is nothing wrong with skipping one or two workouts. However, this becomes an issue if you keep repeating the same. With time, your lack of consistency will only stall your progress. Showing up to exercise is not just enough. You

should be prepared to prove to yourself that you're not just consistent, but you're also working out optimally.

You might be one of those individuals who always says that you will start on Monday, tomorrow, New Year's Day, or when the time is right. There is never a perfect time to start working on your body and improving your overall health and well-being. You need to start now!

Here are a few tips to spark your motivation and get started right away.

Use the Five-Second Rule

Procrastination is a challenge that we all struggle to overcome. We live our lives with many competing priorities for the little time that we have. Therefore, we can't blame ourselves for putting off certain activities that we don't perceive as necessary or urgent. Yet, there are instances when procrastination becomes debilitating, especially when it prevents you from doing something that would help you. Procrastination can affect our lives in profound ways. Besides affecting your career, it can also affect your quality of life and your relationships in ways that would be considered unhealthy.

Like so many other things we do, procrastination is a habit. We are creatures of habit; we often find ourselves falling into the habit of procrastination and thereafter struggle getting out. In most cases, we allow our minds to play tricks on us and withhold rewards; in some other cases, we push ourselves to do something until we get the job done.

The worst thing about procrastination is that when you're struggling with it, it feels as though something like a paper wall is stopping you. Sure, you know you can break off the wall, but you just can't do it. Nothing you do seems to help you achieve your goals. What makes matters worse is that we not only get worked up for failing to do something, but we go throughout the day or the week beating ourselves up about why we failed to take action.

Overall, how can you break free from procrastination and start working out toward the rocking body you've been dreaming of? By applying the five-second rule. This is a rule that was

introduced by Mel Robbins, arguing that we tend to feed our frustrations with negative emotions and that we ultimately think we can't do something. According to Robbins, procrastination is a self-defense mechanism meant to help people deal with stress. Whatever you choose to put off is something that stresses you. Consequently, it's natural to want to escape the stressor (Koulopoulos, 2017).

The notion behind the five-second rule is that you can easily make quick and smart decisions without allowing your mind to talk you out of it. Think about it this way: If you saw a child swimming in distress and no one was around to help, the most logical action you would immediately take is to jump into the water and save them. This stems from the very fast-thinking section of the brain that pushes you to make decisions without hesitating.

How many times have you found yourself hitting the snooze button only to wake up two or three hours later dreading why you keep putting things off? It's frustrating, right? Maybe this is one of the challenges you've been struggling to overcome and you just get your way out. By following the five-second rule, you can decide in a matter of seconds that you will do it. If you want to wake up early and exercise, the moment your alarm goes off, there is no second-guessing yourself. At that moment, you start counting down from five to one and wake up. The five-second time frame doesn't give your mind an opportunity to talk you out of something that you need to do. Practice this rule, and you will realize a big change in how you make decisions. You will be unstoppable, as nothing will deter you from working on your health goals.

Start Small

The best way to emerge victorious in any long-term goal is to start small and work your way up. You will never see marathon runners sprinting at the start of the race. Usually, they start slow as they increase their pace steadily. The same applies to the exercise regimen you will incorporate. Maybe you've not been exercising for some time now or that you've never thought of working out before. Whatever the case, starting with too much enthusiasm will eventually lead to

burnout. Train moderately as you listen to your body. Sure, it's good to push yourself and do the extra rep, but give your body ample time to adjust to the new norm.

Have a Workout Routine

A workout plan will define how you will approach your exercises every day. It tells you what should be done and which specific muscles should be trained. In other words, it guarantees that you get the most from your workout routines. With the right plan in place, you will also save a lot of time and stop yourself from overthinking about what needs to be done. There are thousands of workout routines over the Internet, but this doesn't mean that you should download any of them. Most of these plans don't suit your health goals. More about having a workout routine will be discussed later in this guide.

Track Your Workouts

Besides having a workout routine, you also need to track your workouts. Doing so will help you monitor your progress. With time, you will identify exercises that deliver the best results and those that you often struggle with. This means that you can focus more on routines that get you the results you're after. The best thing about applying this tip is that you will rarely give up, especially when you're making progress from time to time.

Set Rules for Yourself

Set rules that define how you will approach your health and fitness goals. It's important to stay determined on your goal no matter what. As you start thinking of exercising and working toward getting fit, tell yourself that you will not give up. An example of a rule you can set for yourself is that you will not go for more than two days without exercising. In situations where you can't exercise for two days, this rule will push you to go out and sweat it out on the third day. It doesn't matter how simple the exercise might be, you simply need to stick to the rules you set for yourself. Over time, by going the extra mile to follow through your goals, you build consistency.

Expect to Fail

We all go through failure at some point in life. Typically, we start things when we are super motivated to achieve our goals. Somewhere along the way, life happens and we lose sight of what we really wanted. We get worn out, and we jump from one goal to the next.

Knowing that you will have good and bad days is a great way of preparing yourself for those dull moments. You shouldn't lie to yourself that you will always be motivated to work out, as this only sets you up for failure. Prepare yourself for those bad days, and use your motivation to psych yourself up during these times.

Make Your Exercising Convenient

The last thing you need is to sign up for a training routine that will make you feel like you're torturing yourself. It's important to make your routine convenient, as this guarantees that you're motivated to work out. Settle for something that works with your everyday schedule. This might mean exercising early in the morning before you attend to your busy schedule. If you have some free time during the day, you can also add in a few workouts to keep yourself busy. Keep in mind that the short time you spend exercising will make a huge difference if you continue at it.

Self-Sabotage

The process of losing weight and getting fit is always exciting when things are going as expected. You've been tracking your progress for some time, and you're happy with the changes you're noticing. However, just when you were about to achieve your goal, "something" happened. Before you know it, you're back to your old eating habits or your sedentary lifestyle. You start consoling yourself that you will start again the following week or that you had a bad day and therefore you can eat as you want. The problem with the negative attitude you develop is that it gives you a reason to believe that you can't achieve your goals.

Why should you be your worst enemy, especially now that you need to be motivated to accomplish your goals? The biggest

mistake we usually make while striving to get fit is that we stand in the way of our goals. Instead of focusing on the good side of things, we allow our minds to drift and start thinking of the worst that might happen. At the beginning, it's easier to think of your best self—how great you will look once you achieve your overall weight loss goal. When life happens, we overthink the goals we initially set for ourselves, and we assume that we can't change.

Self-sabotaging usually occurs when we make decisions based on our emotions. Instead of thinking logically, we often allow our emotions to get the best of us. Of course, you know how important losing weight or getting fit is to you, but when the going gets tough, you start telling yourself that you can't make it just because you're not in the mood or that things are not working out for you.

To overcome self-sabotage, you need to raise your awareness. Increase your awareness of the common triggers that might drive you to binge or procrastinate exercising. Maybe you love watching your favorite shows and this prevents you from being focused on your training routine. It could be that you binge on food every time you're stressed. Knowing your triggers can help you develop practical steps that will ensure you don't beat yourself up about it.

Take a moment to reflect on some of the barriers that might stop you on your tracks as you set goals to get healthier and fit. Keep in mind that your health and fitness goals are unique. This means that you can't depend on your friends or family to determine whether a specific fitness strategy works for you. Aim to eliminate some of the barriers outlined in this chapter. It might not be easy at first, but it pays to be committed toward a goal that will ensure you live a happier and more fulfilling life. More importantly, you should remember that failure is part of the process. Expect to go through a difficult phase as you start on your journey to ultimate fitness. It is during these low moments that you gather your energy and motivation to keep going no matter what.

Chapter 3: Importance of Fitness

You've heard it a couple of times that exercise is good for your health. The advent of the Internet has also publicized the same message on blogs, YouTube videos, and other forms of content. We are aware of the importance of fitness, but we are never sure of how to go about it. Through my personal experience, I have to stress on the fact that my fitness journey has changed my life in many ways.

The confidence I gain from working out is not just pride. Of course, I like how I look and how my body has transformed over time, but the level of confidence I have is way beyond that. The heavier weights I can lift and the better I get at running every day reminds me of the fact that anything is possible if you put your mind to it. I strongly believe in the idea that we grow through challenges. After all, muscles also grow by pushing your body to the limit.

The main reason why you should make this guide your best friend is not because I want you to look like me, but I'm deeply motivated when I see people's lives changing because they managed to get rid of their bad unhealthy habits. One thing you can be sure of with fitness is that you will reduce the number of visits you pay to the doctor. Similarly, you will develop an action-oriented attitude toward your goal, and you will be more motivated to face life challenges than ever before.

My decision to embrace health and fitness is something that I live to celebrate every other day. It might not be a walk in the park right from the get-go, but with time you will start seeing the perks of living a healthy life. Bear in mind that you don't need to be an athlete for you to reap the benefits of getting fit that will be discussed in this guide. Simple, everyday exercises will give you a reason to enjoy life. Arguably, life is more fulfilling when there is some sort of accomplishment tied to it.

Getting fit is something that you should prioritize in your life. It's sad to learn that there are at least 2.8 million individuals

who die every year because of obesity and overweight-related issues (WHO, 2020). It's even more disheartening that these millions of lives are lost because people overlook the importance of applying the medically proven therapy: exercise. You will agree with the idea that the high cost of healthcare, especially in the U.S., has ignored the simple approach to improving the lives of people. A major emphasis has been placed on costly drugs, expensive operations, and even organ transplants. Where did we go wrong? How did we get here in the first place?

Interestingly, the physicians we depend on to better our health outcomes are paid to perform certain medical procedures instead of giving us a healthy dose of the reality that exercise is what it takes to enhance our health in the long run. The introduction of wonder drugs and other treatment options have lured people to look for quick fixes. We no longer want to take responsibility for our health. If you check various Internet searches, you will realize that most people are out looking for a magic bullet to fitness. Supplements and stringent diets have become the norm as more and more Americans aspire to cheat their way to optimal health and fitness.

Fortunately, people are more enlightened than ever before. We now understand that the weight loss and diet industry has been fooling us all this while. There is no secret to losing weight fast or getting fit. The only secret that these folks are not telling us is that through regular exercise, we can change our lives for the better. It's that simple.

Today, researchers and medical experts continue to question the effectiveness of certain drugs, and they are always advising us to engage in physical activities that will make our bodies stronger and healthier. You might be reading this book because something also tells you that this is the best way toward a more fruitful life worth living.

Benefits of Fitness

Physical activity and good health go hand in hand. It's a well-known fact that engaging in physical activity helps to promote

good health—people have been doing it for centuries now. However, the interesting thing is that today we spend billions to prove this very fact. Perhaps the main reason why we do this is because we are devout optimists. We are always on the lookout for success stories so we can learn from them. Another reason can be attributed to the introduction of the Internet. So many studies have been introduced to the public through the Internet and other media sources. Let's take a look at some of the reasons why fitness is good for you.

Fitness Prevents Heart Disease

Regular exercise is often one recommended strategy to prevent heart disease but this doesn't end there. Studies show that physical activity helps to lower the risk of cardiovascular disease. According to the American Heart Association (AHA), regular exercise is important because it usually helps one to develop heart healthy habits. As a result, heart-related conditions such as high blood pressure, obesity, and poor cholesterol levels can easily be prevented (Madell, 2017).

Generally, people become less active with age, but it's worth noting that keeping yourself fit is of great importance as you grow old. CDC research indicates that heart disease is the leading cause of death for most individuals in the United States (Madell, 2017). Yearly, approximately 525,000 Americans experience their first heart attack. Studies also reveal that physical inactivity is a risk factor that often leads to heart-related complications. Only more than 20% of adults work to ensure that they meet their physical activity guidelines for muscle strengthening and with aerobic activity (Madell, 2017).

Perhaps you're wondering how long you should exercise for you to meet AHA recommendations. About 40 minutes of modest to vigorous exercise three to four times a week is enough. Research shows that dynamic resistance and aerobic exercises are effective strategies to lower blood pressure. You should be motivated to workout knowing that higher levels of physical activity can lower the risk of coronary heart disease by 21% for men and about 29% for women (Madell, 2017).

Needless to say, getting fit is a decision that will help you lower the risk for heart disease and other associated complications.

Build Confidence



Besides helping you lower the risk for heart disease, getting in shape is a great way to build your confidence. While getting fit might look different for everyone, completing 50 to 100 burpees in a row will feel like a huge achievement. Another individual will feel more confident because they are more energetic and have a positive mindset in how they approach other things in their day-to-day lives.

Getting in shape lightens up your moods because you will feel great about your body and what you're accomplishing. The more you achieve your fitness goals, the stronger you get. You will be more focused when attending to other tasks. Before you know it, you will be radiating confidence all over. The people around you will definitely notice this.

You Have More Energy



Another vital reason to get in shape is because you will be more energetic. We all know that it's easy to get the results you want if you consistently put in the work. This means showing up more frequently even when you don't feel like it. At first, it might be daunting to even think of waking up in the morning to exercise. However, once you develop the right habits of exercising regularly, your energy levels increase. As previously noted, your moods will also change.

You Make Better Food Choices

Exercising regularly will get you the results you're after but so will the foods you choose to eat. That said, the more you look toward achieving your goals, the more likely you will want to choose the right foods. The good news is that this will not be

difficult for you. Since you will feel good about yourself and your overall look, you will want to maintain this feeling by eating right. Another reason you will choose to eat healthy foods is because you will be more in tune with your body. Your mindfulness will help you make smart food choices.

Improve Your Sex Life

One way in which getting fit will help improve your sex life is by making you feel sexy. There is always a good feeling that you might feel when you love what you see in the mirror. If you feel good about yourself, then rest assured that the same level of confidence will follow you to the bedroom. When you like how great your body looks, it's natural to want to show off to your partner. You feel sexy, attractive, and confident. Therefore, you're more motivated to engage in exciting sexual activities.

Besides improving your self-esteem, fitness will also ensure that you perform at your best. Studies reveal that men who exercise regularly experience better performance while having sex. The same perks are also experienced by women (Hensley, 2019). Arguably, this is a good reason to start hitting the gym.

It also goes without saying that stress is a mood killer. You can't expect to enjoy sex when you're stressed. Stress can trigger the body to produce more of the stress hormone called cortisol. In turn, this lowers your interest in sex. Exercising, however, helps to produce more of the feel-good hormone endorphins. This will help you maintain a healthy sex drive (Hensley, 2019). Overall, if you want to improve your sex life, getting fit is an ideal way to get there.

You Will Enjoy Life More

It feels good to live a happy and healthy life. If you're a parent, there is no great feeling that surpasses how you feel when playing with your kids. Moreover, it's exciting to be fit enough to engage in your hobbies without feeling like you're straining. When everything is working out in your life, you will look forward to hanging out with your friends and family

during weekends. This is what fitness makes you feel. Physical fitness naturally changes how you perceive life. The more confident you are, the more likely you will want to work hard toward your life goals.

The best thing about getting fit is that you don't have to spend countless hours in the gym to get that perfect body. Regular exercise will strengthen your body and give you more freedom to enjoy participating in the things that bring joy to your life.

Turns You Into a Role Model

Admittedly, we all want to associate ourselves with people who have succeeded in achieving something. As you work on your fitness journey and ultimately achieve your goals, you will be a role model to other people. Chances are that you know some of your friends and family that aspire to get fit. By taking your fitness journey seriously, you will inspire them to see that everything is possible.

Generally, there are numerous reasons why you need to get fit. Apart from improving your overall health, there are other vital reasons, such as enhancing your self-esteem, improving your sex life, and having fun in life.

With these convincing reasons in mind, probably you've started thinking of how you will start working out. Worry not, as the next chapter, will take you through beginner workouts. You will know why how you work out matters and the right type of exercises that you should start with. The important thing is to simplify the whole process so you don't feel overwhelmed.

Before we get into detail about the right workouts for you and how you should do it, it's vital to remind you that how you view exercising is equally important. It's important to shift your perspective and stop looking at working out as though it's some sort of a chore or an obligation. Having this perspective will only drive you to put off working out. To avoid this, start thinking of exercise as a pleasurable activity and anticipate it. The key issue here is to learn to enjoy exercising.

Today, most people also fancy the idea of working out at home. However, it gets to a point where we are less inspired to continue. We might start off motivated, but we slowly lose track and resort to our unhealthy sedentary lifestyles. If you intend to work out at home, be sure to determine how best you can enjoy exercising.

It's possible to go from disliking working out to enjoying it. You only need to be committed and understand that there is a lot to benefit from exercising. Adopt the right attitude by training your mind to consider exercise as something important in your life.

Chapter 4: Beginner Workouts

Congratulations on deciding that enough is enough! Now is the perfect time for you to start working out. You should understand that this is one of the most difficult steps that most people dread when thinking of losing weight and getting in shape. You've done it! Therefore, you should be proud of yourself. This is the first and the most important step to a new and enhanced body and mind.

There is no other magic pill you should be thinking of. Exercise is the magic pill that will ensure you reap the benefits associated with the activities detailed herein. Whether you're suffering from a specific disease, or you're simply motivated to improve your overall health, it doesn't matter as long as you're inspired enough to kick-start your fitness journey.

Working out will guarantee you achieve your health and fitness goals, but this comes with a price—you need to get moving and keep up the pace if you really want to cash in all the perks. This doesn't imply that you should follow a strict weight loss program or a stringent diet. The reality is that you can benefit from engaging in different types of exercises and healthy meal plans.

At the beginning of your fitness mission, there are a wide array of exercises at your disposal, including dancing, walking, biking, gardening, and even doing household chores. The most vital thing is to settle for exercises you enjoy now that you're starting out. The last thing you need is to feel like you're torturing yourself with grueling workouts. It's easy to develop healthy habits around activities you enjoy doing. So, focus on doing what you love before turning up a higher notch.

The length of time you work out will vary, though exercising for approximately 40 minutes seems to be the best amount of time. However, this doesn't mean that if you fail to exercise for 40 minutes, you won't see the benefits. The truth is that

you might notice positive changes even by working out for 10–15 minutes every day.

Ready to get started? This chapter puts together the most basic exercise workouts you can incorporate in your program, including important definitions of common exercise terms.

Getting Started

Planning is a crucial step you shouldn't overlook when you're getting started with working out. However, to achieve your fitness goals, you need momentum, and the more you develop the right momentum, the easier it is to stay motivated toward making your dreams a reality. To do this, you must take action. Besides showing that you're committed to meet your goals, it's important to keep yourself motivated to complete your workout routines.

The following are important things you should consider as you prepare.

Get Your Doctor's Clearance

The first step to any exercise routine is to determine how fit you are for a particular physical activity. Start by consulting a doctor, especially if you're ill, injured, or you suffer from certain complications. Talk to a doctor to be sure that it's safe for you to work out. It's also important to talk about some of the medications you're using because certain medications can affect your heart rate.

Besides that, it's helpful to talk to your personal trainer on how they can guide you to start your workouts. When you're new to certain exercises, especially at the gym, it's important to get it right the first time. This helps prevent potential injuries.

Fitness Definitions

Below are common fitness terms that you will come across in this book.

Aerobic/Cardiovascular Activity

These refer to strenuous exercises that can potentially increase your heart rate. Some of these exercises include cycling, running, walking, dancing, and swimming.

Stretching or Flexibility Training

This workout improves the motion range of joints. Inactivity and age often cause tendons, muscles, and ligaments to weaken or shorten over time.

Resistance, Weight, or Strength Training

This type of workout aims to enhance the strength and function of muscles. There are specific exercises that target different muscle groups. Weight lifting is a common form of strength training. Additionally, working out with resistance bands and push-up exercises also strengthen your muscles.

Set

This term is mostly used in strength training. However, it refers to the number of repetitions that one performs sequentially. In other words, it means repeating the same workout routine a certain number of times. For example, when lifting weights, one might do 10 bicep curls, rest and perform another “set” of the same.

Repetition (Rep)

The term rep refers to a single instance where you perform a specific workout. For example, you might perform six reps of bicep curls before resting.

Warm Up

This is where you prepare your body to exercise. Usually, light aerobic exercises are performed, such as walking or jogging on the treadmill.

Prepare to Workout

With regard to fitness, there are two key types of workouts: strength training, which helps build muscle that enhances metabolism; and your calorie-burning rate, and cardio, which helps burn more calories by increasing your heart rate.

Combined together, these exercises can deliver the best results when looking to tone down.

Cardio Workout

The following are simple exercises you can perform at home, at the gym, or in an outdoor space. Keep in mind that these are beginner workouts which will fit your fitness level, especially if you've never tried exercising before. More intense workouts will also be pointed out.

Beginner

- **High Knees**

Basically, high knees involve running in place. This exercise can be performed anywhere as long as you have some small space.

1. Stand straight with your feet together and place your arms on your sides.
2. Lift the right knee toward your chest. Lower the leg and repeat the movement with the left knee.
3. Continue alternating the right and left knee while pushing your arms up and down.

- **Butt Kicks**

Now, for this exercise, instead of raising your knees toward your chest, butt kicks involve moving your feet in the opposite direction. Lift your heels toward your butt.

1. Stand tall with your feet together and arms on your sides.
2. Slowly move the right heel toward your butt. Lower the right heel and alternate with the left heel.
3. Continue alternating the right and the left heel. You can push your arms up and down or alternatively hold them together close to your chest.

- **Standing Oblique Crunch**

This low-intensity cardio workout is ideal for beginners. It helps to engage the core muscles, especially on your sides.

1. Stand straight with your feet shoulder-width apart. Raise your hands and place them at the back of your head with the elbows pointing outward.
2. Slightly bend to the left, moving your left elbow down and left knee up.
3. Move to the starting position and repeat the same on the right side.

- **Jumping Jacks**

For a full-body exercise, incorporate some jumping jacks. This classic workout routine will engage your entire body and increase your heart rate.

1. Stand tall with both feet together and arms on either side.
2. Jump up and spread your legs while lifting your arms over your head. Your legs should be wider than your shoulder width as you jump.
3. Gently land on your toes and repeat the movement.

- **Toe Taps**

This is a simple exercise that can be done in front of a low-raised object or staircase.

1. Stand in front of the raised object or step. Move your feet to the step so that the toes rest on it.
2. Switch legs to bring the right or left foot on the step. Once you get the movement, increase speed to get your heart pumping.
3. Continue alternating the left and right foot.

- **Squat Jumps**

It's good to give yourself a push to build endurance and strength. Squat jumps is a workout that targets the lower body.

It's a moderate-intensity cardio workout that can help you burn more calories.

1. Stand up tall with your feet shoulder-width apart. Bend your knees to assume a squat position.
2. Swing your arms back to help you find momentum to jump and leap.
3. Gently land to the starting position and repeat.

- **Standing Alternating Toe Touches**

This routine works on your core, arms, and legs. It's a great full-body cardio workout.

1. Stand straight with your feet shoulder-width apart. Engage your core.
2. Lift your left leg straight up. Move it to the starting position and simultaneously lift the right leg.
3. Repeat.

- **Lunges**

Like squats, lunges workout are deceptively simple, but they are highly effective. The best part is that you can perform lunges anywhere.

1. Stand straight with your feet shoulder-width apart.
2. Take a step forward with your left leg.
3. Lower your hips gently while ensuring that your left foot is rooted on the floor and back heel lifted.
4. Descend slowly until your left knee almost touches the floor, assuming a 90-degree bend.
5. Push yourself back to the starting position and alternate with the right leg.

- **Box Jumps**

Box jumps is another recommended cardio workout that targets your lower body.

1. Stand straight in front of a step or a slightly raised box with your feet shoulder-width apart. Place your arms on your sides. Ensure you engage your core.
2. Bend your knees as though you're assuming a squat position. Keep your feet rooted to the floor, swing your arms back, and jump explosively on top of the step or box.
3. Aim to land gently and lean forward slightly. Move to the starting position and repeat the same movement.

- **Plank Jacks**

A plank jacks workout is a moderate-intensity workout. It targets your arms, core, and your lower body.

1. Assume a plank position. This means placing your arms shoulder-width apart while touching the floor. Your legs and lower body should be straight while in this position.
2. Bring your feet together simultaneously.
3. Jump back to your starting position and repeat.

- **Jump Rope**

Jump rope is a simple exercise that should be part of your workout routine. It's highly recommended for beginners. With this exercise, all you need is a rope and some room to jump.

Now that you know a few exercises that you can incorporate in your cardio routine, the next thing is to plan for them. As a beginner, select two or three exercises that you're comfortable with. The more you build your stamina, the more you can add more workouts to your routine. The idea here is to avoid overwhelming yourself as you start. Start small and aim for consistency more than anything else.

Strength Training Workout



Combining strength training workouts with cardio is one ideal way of getting in shape within a short period. While you might assume that the cardio workouts we outlined are enough for you, the advantages of strength training are too good to pass up. A strong muscular foundation calls for frequent strength training.

Like any other exercise, you may fail to enjoy strength training when starting out. However, if you do it right from the word go, you will have the right motivation to keep doing the things you love. Once you're accustomed to some strength training workouts, you will increase your body's metabolism, meaning you will be burning more calories throughout the day.

Again, aim to start small as you increase your weights. The best way to approach this is by choosing light weights that can allow you to complete 10 reps. By the time you're on the eighth rep, you will push yourself to complete a set. Over

time, the more you challenge your muscles with weights you can manage, the more likely you will build muscle.

The idea of strength training shouldn't be confusing. Maybe the idea of weights might scare you off from exercising in the first place. However, it should be noted that strength training basically involves the use of resistance in the form of weights (dumbbells), machine weights, or fixed weights.

If you're new to the weights section, you shouldn't be scared, as we will guide you on the best exercises you can perform at home without the need for these weights. We will also outline for you some of the benefits of strength training and why you should ensure you make it part of your workout routine.

It should be made clear that weight training and resistance training all fall under the same umbrella. Both exercises are an integral aspect of strength training. Conventional strength training often revolves around isolating muscles, one at a time, by exercising them to fatigue. For beginners, however, strength training entails compound movements (workouts that focus on muscle groups) until one is strong enough to isolate the muscles they have built over time.

Some of strength training benefits you should expect include:

- Improves stress
- Lowers cholesterol
- Improves posture
- Improves sleep
- Increases bone density
- Decreased risk of injury
- Increases muscle mass
- Improves body composition

Clearly, strength training doesn't just make you strong—it also helps to improve your heart health, increase metabolism, and give you an ideal posture. These benefits should motivate you to build strength while doing your best to get in shape.

How to Get Started With Strength Training

The following brief guide on strength training will guide you in building the courage you need to enter the weights room and get fit. One thing you should understand is that it's possible to build strength without weights.

Perhaps you might be wondering whether you need certain equipment for you to get started. The truth is that you don't need any fancy kit for you to start strength training. The most important thing to mull over is the type of strength training that you wish to practice. Some of the main requirements for strength training while starting out include kettlebells, dumbbells, and cables. If you will be working out in the gym, all of this equipment can be found there. You can also choose to purchase your home equipment and get busy working out at home. Once you build strength and start lifting heavy weights, you will require an additional kit, such as a lifting belt and a pair of gloves to help you grip weights better.

Newbie gains are a real thing in the fitness world. You shouldn't be worried that it might take you ages before you build enough strength to lift heavier weights and get toned up. It's easy for one to notice real changes within a short period while strength training.

When working out without equipment, you can build strength using your body weight before you progress into using barbells, kettlebells, and all other equipment in the gym. As your body adapts to the new stimuli, you should expect to see positive improvements right away. However, consistency is key to getting the results you are after. Exercising for two weeks and relaxing for a whole week won't cut it. Develop a routine and stick to it. Generally, strength training two or three times every week will boost your strength within a short period.

After consistently training for a few months, expect to see an increase in strength by about 20% to 30% from where you started. However, this will vary from one individual to the other, depending on how one exercises, their lifestyle, and overall nutrition.

It should be noted that you can make strength improvements without lifting weights. In fact, before you hit the gym to lift

weights, consider using your body weight. Focusing on your body weight is an excellent way to develop your strength from the get-go. From push-ups, to pull-ups, to using explosive power workouts, you can develop your strength in the same way you would have with weights.

Strength Training Tips

The following strength training tips should guide you as you start off lifting weights.

- **Develop a Positive Mindset**

Take a deep breath the first time you enter the weights room. Enter with pride. It's okay to feel timid at first, but bear in mind that some people in the gym are too busy with their workouts to even notice you.

If you're thinking of working out at home, develop a positive mindset toward working out. Find an ideal space where you will be working out frequently. This should be a convenient place where you won't be easily distracted or too lazy to move around to create space.

- **Start Light**

The key to progressing and building your strength is to start lighter. You don't have to know the right weights to lift for you to get in shape. Pick up light weights and perform a few exercises. With time, you can adjust as you listen to your body and how strong you get. If you're not sure about the right way to perform a specific exercise, be sure to do some research on the best way of doing it. Investing in a personal trainer will also help.

- **Keep a Gym Log**

It's strongly recommended to keep a gym log. You can easily do this on your smartphone using fitness applications or manually record this in your journal. This log will help you keep track of the weights you carried, plus how many reps and sets you performed for each exercise. Over time, you can use this log to determine how you're progressing. It might also help you to determine whether you need to try lifting heavier weights.

- **Stay Consistent**

Strength training is not an easy feat nor is it a guessing game. It takes consistency for you to build strength depending on the type of exercise you engage in. You will appreciate your progress after staying consistent for a few weeks or months.

- **Keep It Simple**

Simplicity is key to starting off your fitness regimen on a positive note. You don't have to complicate the whole process by using all forms of equipment you come across. You can build strength by simply making the best out of compound exercises. These are workouts that focus on multiple muscle groups, such as deadlift, squat, rows, and bench press.

Strength Training Workouts

The following bodyweight and weighted workouts are ideal for beginners. If you will be lifting weights, be sure to lift weights that you can manage. Keep in mind that you don't want to get injured now that you're about to work on getting in shape.

- **Crab Walk and Push-Up**

1. Start by taking a high plank position. While doing this, your back should be straight and core tightened.
2. Move sideways three steps with both your arms and feet.
3. Once you've moved three steps, perform one push-up.
4. Crab walk to the starting position.
5. Perform three reps.

- **Triceps Dips**

1. Using a bench, chair, or a raised surface, place your palms face down close to your thighs. Your fingers should tightly grip the edge of the surface. Ensure your feet are rooted on the floor with your knees bent.

2. Next, scoot forward moving your butt and hips in front of the seat.
3. Engage your core and lower your hips by bending your elbows. Lower yourself until your upper arms are parallel to the floor.
4. Push yourself back to the starting position. Count this as one rep.
5. Perform 10 reps.

- **Bodyweight Tempo Squat**

1. Stand up straight with feet shoulder-width apart.
2. Lower your butt until your thighs are parallel to the floor.
3. Pause in this position for five seconds.
4. Next, return to the starting position. Count this as one rep.
5. Perform 10 reps.

- **Lateral Lunge**

1. Stand up straight with your feet shoulder-width apart. Ensure your toes are pointed straight forward.
2. Step out with your left foot as wide as possible.
3. Now drop your hips and back slightly while ensuring that the right leg is kept straight. While doing this, stretch the groin on the right leg and keep both feet rooted on the floor.
4. As you land your left heel on the floor, powerfully push yourself back to the starting position. Count this as one rep.
5. Perform 10 reps and switch sides.

- **Plank Into a Squat**

1. Assume a plank position.

2. Tighten your core then jump to move your feet toward your arms.
3. Quickly move your arms forward assuming a squat position.
4. Reverse the movement to move to your starting position. That's one rep.
5. Perform 10 reps.

The next section will look at strength training exercises you can perform while using weights. Aim for 12 reps for each exercise depending on the amount of weight you carry. If you will be lifting heavy weights, aim for 10 reps.

- **Kettlebell Goblet Squat**

1. Stand tall with your feet shoulder-width apart and hold a kettlebell or a dumbbell. Slightly tilt your toes out while in this position.
2. Grip the kettlebell by its arm facing up.
3. Pin your elbows to your ribcage and position the weight slightly under your chin.
4. While in this position, lower your body to assume a squat position and move back to the starting position. That's one rep.
5. Perform 10 reps.

- **Kettlebell Deadlift**

1. Grab a heavy kettlebell or a dumbbell.
2. Place the weight close to your feet in front of you.
3. Stand straight with your feet shoulder-width apart. Bend slightly to pick up the weight in front of you.
4. Tighten your core and ensure your back is straight. Push your butt out and work from your legs to pull yourself back up to a standing position.
5. Perform 10 reps.

- **Dumbbell Lunges**

1. Stand up straight with two dumbbells on either side of your arms.
2. Step back with your left leg and lower your body to assume a lunge position.
3. Pause for two seconds and return to the starting position.
4. Switch sides with the left leg.
5. Perform 10 reps.

- **Dumbbell Bench Press**

1. Lie face up on a comfortable bench with two lightweight dumbbells held on each side.
2. Slowly lower the weights to the sides of your chest.
3. Push the weights back to the starting position. Count this as one rep.
4. Perform 10 reps.

- **Dumbbell Overhead Press**

1. Stand straight with a pair of dumbbells on both hands, raising them above your shoulders. Your palms should face forward.
2. Engage your core and lift the weights up above your head until your arms are straight.
3. Slowly lower the dumbbells to the starting position. That's one rep.
4. Perform 10 reps.

Generally, the best approach to getting started with your workouts is to set realistic goals. Start small and focus on progressing every week. This means that it would be imperative for you to continuously monitor your performance every once in a while. When you notice that you're getting stronger, you should add more weights or perform more reps. Aim to switch things up to ensure your body doesn't hit a plateau, a period where you feel like there is nothing you gain by working out. More importantly, always make sure that you

set realistic fitness goals. Your goals should be realistic enough to motivate you to continue performing similar exercises in the next few weeks or months.

Chapter 5: Workout Routine



In the digitized environment that we live in today, it's often a challenge to settle for the right exercises. Choosing one workout routine can become challenging because there are plenty of workouts to choose from. Arguably, it's good to mix up different exercises in your training routine. This ensures that you don't get bored and it also guarantees that you don't hit a plateau. However, the problem with mixing workouts is that you might go overboard with the exercise variations, especially when social media and peer pressure are factors you have to deal with. If you're using bodyweight to get fit and your friends are lifting weights, you might be tempted to start lifting weights. Worse, you might start a new exercise program that doesn't suit you. We all want to try new things. But there is a thin line between experimenting new workouts to get in shape and forcing yourself to engage in a routine you don't enjoy.

One of the main reasons individuals try to add in different exercises into their training routine is because they want to get fit within a short period. You might want to get into shape without spending months or years sticking to a group of workouts. Your motivation to get fit fast might give you the impression that the best way to do this is by incorporating a unique set of exercises that will keep your body guessing. Basically, you will be out seeking optimal results, which is a good thing.

However, it's worth noting that squeezing in all the workouts you can think of doesn't guarantee that you get the best results. In fact, you might reap the benefits of exercising by sticking to a few ideal workouts. While choosing the exercises that you will use to get fit, the most important thing is to choose what you enjoy. Exercises you don't enjoy but do it anyway might actually work against you. Since you don't enjoy these workouts, chances are that you will give up on the way.

Individuals often feel the pressure to try out all kinds of exercises while at the gym or at home because every approach is often touted as the best compared to what they have been doing. For instance, you may have been using your bodyweight to squat, but it gets to a point where you don't feel that this is working out for you and you try something else like jogging or running to help you get the results you are after sooner. At the end of the day, trying something new doesn't necessarily mean that you will lose weight or get fit fast.

Establishing an Exercise Routine

With the busy nature of life, keeping a steady exercise routine is nothing but a challenge. People often struggle to maintain their exercise routines, sometimes due to their busy schedules or because of their hectic lifestyles. At times, individuals simply can't find time to fully focus on working out. We all go through this challenge. Oftentimes, we make resolutions to exercise and keep fit, but along the way we lose sight of our goals and we give up. In most cases, you find people giving all

sorts of excuses why they can't keep up with their workout routines.

We all have different reasons why we can't stick to a specific routine the moment we start exercising. What are some of the reasons you usually use to console yourself? Maybe you keep telling yourself that you lack time or that you keep procrastinating that you will start tomorrow. Perhaps you're waiting for the perfect time to start exercising when you're done with your busy schedule. But there is never a good time to start doing something. If you must start working out, it means you should start right away. Forget about waiting for the perfect time because everything around you will always demand your time. So, prioritize working out because it's good for your health and it's something that will change your life for good in the long run.

If you've made several resolutions to exercise and you've never followed through to kick off your training, you're not alone. Cut yourself some slack and decide to start over again. Never allow fear and uncertainty to get in the way. More importantly, never give up. You should keep trying until you find a routine that works for you.

Perhaps you're wondering about something that you can do differently to ensure you stick to a fitness routine without giving up along the way. Before you think of a perfect program that will guarantee you get fit within a short period, identify the exercises you enjoy. That's the secret. If you enjoy doing something, you're more likely to develop the right habits around it.

Exercising doesn't need to be expensive or complicated. In fact, you don't have to sign up for any gym class or buy the best training equipment for you to be more active. You should also realize that there is no single workout that is considered as "the best." The most important thing that makes the biggest difference is that you enjoy the activity you choose. This can range from walking to running to lifting weights or taking a dance class.

Fitness experts will often recommend settling for a fitness program that fits you. For any program to work for you, you

must be ready to make lifestyle changes. The routine you choose should be something that works for you. It should be realistic enough to fit your everyday schedule. When you have such a program, you will enjoy it because it doesn't interfere with other important things in your life. The best part is that the chosen program will also be sustainable. You're more likely to use it over the long haul.

The following section takes a look at the basics of establishing a workout routine.

Determine Your “Get In Shape” Goals

Start with the most basic things that influence the type of exercises you perform and how much time you dedicate to working out. Determining your fitness goals should be the first thing. What are your fitness goals? Are you out to lose weight? Are you looking to build muscle? Are you preparing for a specific competition?

Whatever your goals are, you should write them down. Doing this helps to raise your awareness of what you're actually after. You can't just exercise because other people are doing it. It's important to have SMART goals that guide you to the finish line. Clearly set goals will shape HOW you establish your workout routine.

When setting SMART goals, it means your fitness goals should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely. The best thing about setting goals is that it helps you connect with the reasons why doing so is important to you. Moreover, you're more likely to see better results when you start your fitness journey with SMART goals as opposed to just exercising blindly with no plan.

Why Set Fitness Goals

Before hitting the gym or even working out at home, you need to set clear and realistic goals. Here's why:

- **Change is More Possible**

Making big lifestyle changes usually appears insurmountable. This is one of the main reasons most folks hesitate to start a

new fitness routine. The fact that you've decided to take this journey means that you're courageous enough to say goodbye to the past and take charge of your health and fitness. It might not be the first time you're thinking of changing your life, but taking the big leap might have been the most challenging thing for you. Just to keep you motivated, setting goals will help you see that everything is within your reach. Nothing is impossible.

Set small, realistic, and achievable goals. Doing so opens your eyes to notice the small changes happening to your life. The steps you take every day toward a better life will ensure you enjoy the journey toward a healthier and happier life.

- **Goals Spur Motivation**

Finding the motivation you need to get fit might not be as challenging as you initially thought. The biggest challenge most trainers face is staying motivated. With the right goals, you will always have something to fall back to. Since you know why you're doing something, this will be your source of motivation. Every time you feel stuck, you will turn to your goals and find the inspiration you need to keep going.

- **With Goals, You See Progress**

When you set goals, you're not only motivated to work out over the long haul, but it also helps to see yourself moving toward a certain direction. SMART goals will help you see yourself making progress. If you've set a goal to lose 20 pounds in six months, you will be fueled to keep going when you see yourself losing a few pounds every week. Admittedly, the positive changes you notice will motivate you to keep up the workout routine.

- **Workout is More Efficient With Goals**

With well set goals, your workouts will be more efficient than it would be otherwise. Without goals, you won't be focused on your exercises. After all, there is nothing specific you expect to accomplish. But with the right goals, you will know what you're after and how to get there. This means that you will be more focused to work hard toward your health goals.

- **Without Goals, Success is Elusive**

What this all means is that without goals, success is more difficult to accomplish. You will probably lose some weight after working out for some time or that you will get stronger. While you might be healthier compared to when you started, the reality is that you might fail to achieve what you wanted. Goals are there to help you achieve what you hoped for.

Evidently, goal setting is integral to accomplishing your fitness goals. But it's not as easy as just saying what you want. Maybe you want to get leaner and stronger or that you want to lose some pounds before the end of the year. This sounds so simple, right? You're wrong! Goal setting goes beyond this. Setting effective goals is a thoughtful process that takes time. You want to be sure that you're planning for something that you will succeed after a few weeks or months.

Think about it this way - we all set goals to get fit. More often, we do this at the beginning of the year as we expect to make positive changes in our lives. But we quickly give up when we realize that it wasn't as easy as we thought. What this means is that people are more than willing to take charge of their health. However, they don't know what to do to make sure they set goals that prepare them to succeed.

Setting Effective Fitness Goals

- **Break Goals into Mini Goals**

It's good to be ambitious, but setting big fitness goals will only overwhelm you. Sometimes we set big goals with positive intentions, but these big goals end up discouraging us. Setting a goal to lose 50 pounds after 10 months is indeed a worthy fitness goal, but it's challenging to achieve this task. However, you can simplify this goal by breaking it down into mini-goals. Instead of focusing on losing weight by the end of the year, focus on what you can do in one month, three weeks, or even a week. Breaking down your goals makes them seem achievable. You need a positive mindset to help ensure you're motivated toward your fitness goal.

- **Goals Are Specific and Measurable**

People with performance goals will be more motivated to succeed both in the short and in the long run. This happens because they know what they want. For instance, someone who wants to lose 10 pounds in three months has something specific to work toward. Therefore, it's easier for them to devise a realistic plan to achieve this goal.

- **Realistic and Attainable Goals**

Setting unrealistic goals only sets you up for failure. Sure, there is nothing wrong with setting big goals, but unrealistic goals are sometimes discouraging. Small goals will help you develop a positive perspective toward the fitness challenge. For instance, if you set a goal to exercise thrice a week, it's easier compared to exercising for five or six days as a beginner. The point here is that unrealistic goals will only lead to frustration and it increases the likelihood of quitting in the process. Conversely, small realistic goals will give you a reason to smile as you see yourself making progress every day.

- **Time-Bound Goals**

Another vital aspect of good goal setting is that your goals should be time-constrained. There is a good reason why your goals should have a specific time limit. Without this, you will feel like there is no rush in achieving your fitness goals. In other words, there is no sense of urgency in your goal setting process, which shouldn't be the case. If your goal is just to lose 20 pounds, when will you achieve this goal? You might lose 20 pounds in a year, two years or even five years. In fact, you might even spend the rest of your life working toward a goal you're not sure whether you will achieve or not. An effective way to set goals demands that you set big goals with a big time limit. After that, break down your goal into smaller goals and shorter timeframes.

- **Goals Should Be Meaningful**

If your fitness goals are not meaningful, you won't be motivated to achieve them. There should be some form of emotional attachment to your health goals. That said, aim to set your own goals. Seek inspiration from other people, but the goal setting process should be something personal. Decide

what needs to change in your life for you to reach your destination. This might mean changing your lifestyle, eating habits and other unhealthy habits that could prevent you from accomplishing your goals.

Setting goals is the first and the most important step to making sustainable changes in your fitness journey. Ensure you follow the recommended tips to making desirable changes that will guarantee you get fit.

How Much Exercise Do You Need?

Recent studies reveal that adults should get approximately 2.5 hours of moderate-intensity physical activity weekly. You can divide this time according to your workout routine (Rettner, 2016). However, most fitness experts recommend exercising for approximately 30 minutes for five days a week, but it doesn't mean that if you don't have 30 minutes to workout you shouldn't exercise at all. Exercising for even 10 minutes can make a huge difference toward meeting the weekly recommendation by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) (Rettner, 2016). What this means is that you can take a walk for 10 minutes in the morning and jog for 10 minutes in the evening before finally exercising for another 10 minutes on the treadmill at home.

The good thing about splitting your exercise into shorter time periods is that you won't feel inconvenienced in any way. After all, exercising for 10 minutes won't take that much time, so you will be motivated to complete your morning or evening routine before attending to other pressing issues. Keeping your body on the move will help burn more calories. More importantly, it's an ideal way of developing the right habits toward a healthy lifestyle. Why procrastinate training while you could simply sweat it out in just 10 or 15 minutes?

Research also shows that engaging in more vigorous activity, such as running means that one can reduce the amount of time spent working out. According to HHS, 75 minutes of vigorous physical activity weekly is equivalent to 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity weekly (Rettner, 2016). HHS also recommends that people should engage in strength training

exercises at least twice weekly. Besides building muscle mass, strength training helps to increase the number of calories the body burns. Additionally, without strength training, the body will lose muscle mass with age. This means that the body's body fat percentage will increase (Rettner, 2016). Strength training is also helpful as it strengthens your bones.

Getting Started With a Routine

You may set a goal to exercise for 30 minutes in a single day, but this might not be as easy as it sounds, especially if you've never exercised before. A rule of thumb to keep in mind is that you must start slow and focus on progressing. Start cautiously while making sure that the exercises you choose are not strenuous. With time, focus on increasing the intensity of your workouts. The more you see yourself improving, the more likely you will keep up with your chosen routine.

As a beginner, start exercising for 15–20 minutes in a single day, three times a week. Over time, increase the length of time you work out as you listen to your body. Your goal should be to focus on improving until you get to 30 minutes of exercise for five days a week. Going from zero to 100 within a short period is not recommended, as you're not likely to stick to your routine. Instead, start small and aim to improve the areas where you think your body is adjusting well without straining.

Avoiding Injuries

Choosing exercises you enjoy is equally as important as choosing low-impact workouts while starting out. Walking, biking, or swimming are low-impact physical activities that will make your heart pump without straining your joints. High-impact physical activities might put pressure on your muscles and joints. When starting out, it might not be the best idea to go for high-impact exercises because you risk getting injured.

Evaluate your current fitness level and capabilities. If you used to workout while in high school, it doesn't mean that you're fit enough after 10 years without going through the same drills

you used to perform. A lot has changed since then, and the best way to avoid injuries is by starting slow. Before you run 10 miles, jog for about a week as you increase the distance. With time, your body will adjust, and you will be strong enough to handle high-intensity routines.

Maintaining a Routine

It's easy to resolve that you will be working out for 30 minutes, three times a week. Making such decisions is the easiest part. However, the biggest obstacle is implementing what you want to do. Most people give up easily because they never find the motivation they need to maintain their fitness routines. When starting out, people are always motivated and confident enough to lose weight or to achieve the health goals they have set for themselves. After a few days or weeks working out, everything changes, and they lose the motivation they once had. What seemed easy and feasible just a few days ago can somehow morph into something unbearable and almost impossible.

Obviously, people tend to blame life happenings. Some say that they are too busy to exercise or that they just don't feel like it. Others are just too focused on other things that they fail to prioritize the importance of working out, but the biggest threat to setting realistic resolutions lies in our heads. To help you stick to a workout routine, the following tips should help you.

Focus On Just Showing Up

Often, one of the biggest challenges preventing people from working out is not the fear of working out but the ease of getting to the place of working out. For instance, before going out to exercise, you might dread how long it will take you to get to the gym or the space where you usually exercise. Showing up is more than half the battle. To ensure that your mind doesn't talk you out of your workout routine, focus on just showing up. Worry less about how intense the physical activity will be or how tired you might feel after working out. Eliminate all these negative thoughts by concerning yourself with the task of showing up to the gym. Once you avail

yourself, you will be glad that you did your best to get there. This mental push will motivate you to make good use of your time while at the gym.

Be Patient

At the start of your fitness program, it feels great to know that you will get in shape, build muscle, or simply look better than before. Amid this frenzy, it's easy to raise your expectations and expect immediate results. At first, you may be motivated to lift the weights, but after a week, you might get discouraged when you can't lift heavier weights. In reality, depending on your fitness level, perfecting your exercise routines will take weeks or even months. Consistent hard work is what will get you the results you need after some time. The disconnect between your expectations and reality often discourages many.

An ideal approach to ensure you're not demoralized is to lower your expectations and admit the fact that lasting changes don't happen overnight. You need to be patient and trust the process. In the long run, you will notice the results you are after. Every time you feel anxious for results, remind yourself that patience is key. Good things take time, and this is of great importance, especially with regard to fitness.

Ditch the All-or-Nothing Approach

Most newbies adopt an all-or-nothing approach when it comes to performing certain workouts. They tend to believe that they have to perform certain exercises in a specific way. For instance, one might plan to exercise from 6 a.m. to 7 a.m. When they fail to wake up this early, they might choose to throw in the towel altogether.

The problem with setting strict standards that don't allow for flexibility is that when life gets in the way, discouragement sets in. When you find yourself struggling to exercise at a specific time of the day, you might give up completely thinking that you don't have time to work out. On the contrary, if you were flexible enough, you could have opted to exercise in the evening instead. This means that you would have been content with the fact that you managed to create time despite having a tight schedule.

So, while it's a good thing to stick to a specific training routine, when things don't go as planned, strive to do as much as you can to create time. Stop believing that you've thrown your day's program out the window. There is plenty of time to exercise. You only need to set your priorities right. Always keep in mind that 30 minutes is better than 15 minutes, and that 10 minutes is better than zero. Aim to do something instead of giving up. The key to building consistency is by showing up even when there is no time or when you don't feel like it.

Visualize Your Success

To this point, you understand the importance of setting SMART fitness goals. Goals will motivate you to keep up with the chase. When setting these goals, it's vital to spend some time visualizing how your life will change after achieving your health goal. Think about how good you will look with the well-toned body you've tried so hard to work on. Reflect on how happy you will be when you finally develop healthier habits that define your life. Visualize such moments and savor the good feelings attached to your goals. You can journal how it feels, as this will help you build confidence and motivation you need to keep going.

Accept the Inevitable

Even the most experienced trainers will have bad days when they don't feel like working out—it's normal. This happens to everyone. On these bad days, judging yourself negatively is the last thing you should do. Understanding that there are good and bad days will help you navigate through the bad days when you feel like nothing is working out for you. The lack of motivation to work out during these days is not a sign of weakness.

Start With Something Easy

Still, during those days when you're struggling to find the motivation you need to work out, the best way to overcome this is by starting easy. Tell yourself that you will only work out for a few minutes or lift lighter weights. After warming up and lifting weights, chances are that you will want to stay

longer. The point here is not to give up even before you start, so aim to start without making your workouts too much of a big deal.

Celebrate the Small Wins

It's also good to celebrate the small accomplishments you make along the way. While you might not be as strong as you wanted, appreciate the improvements you've made after a few weeks or months. Take pride in the small gains you've accomplished. Doing so boosts your confidence to keep going. You won't be strong or fit overnight, but the small gains you make every day make a huge difference.

Don't Compare Yourself With Other People

Comparing yourself with other people will only lead to frustrations. The fact that you can't perform a certain workout like someone else might feel intimidating. However, you should remember that you've seen yourself improve over the past few weeks or months. Focus on individual progress while pushing yourself from time to time. We all have different health and fitness goals, so comparing yourself to other people only derails you from focusing on the fitness goals you initially set for yourself.

In a way, a fitness routine helps you to stick to a certain program and keeps you focused on your health goals. Developing a fitness routine is as important as sticking to it. You might not be as motivated to keep up with a specific routine in the long run, but it's important to always remind yourself why you started. Set SMART goals, and strive to develop the right habits toward these goals. If it gets to a point where you don't feel like exercising or that you don't have enough time to work out, just show up at the gym. Winning your mental battles to work out is very important in your fitness journey.

Chapter 6: Specific Workouts for Specific Body Types

Depending on your body type, it might take some time before you notice any positive changes in your body physique as you train to get fit. Some people might find it easy to build muscle whereas others struggle to bulk. On the other hand, some individuals build muscle easily while at the same time struggling to keep fat at bay when they are not exercising regularly. The way in which the body responds to any fitness routine all falls down to the body type one has.

While you might think that we all have similar body types, there are different body types including ectomorph, endomorph, and mesomorph (Souza, 2018). Knowing your body type can help you make sure that you train for your ideal body type.

Three Different Body Types



It's vital to know which body type you are as this helps to adjust your training and diet to achieve your health and fitness

goals.

Ectomorph Body Type

Individuals with long limbs relative to their body size often have ectomorph body types. As you may have guessed, these people struggle building muscle. Some of the typical characteristics of an ectomorph body type is that they have a delicate frame; long and lean; fast metabolism; and a body similar to marathon runners (Migala, 2020).

It's important to understand that we all have unique body types. Knowing your body type can help you understand how this influences your workout routines and how best you can adjust.

Training as an Ectomorph

Without bias to your body type, one important thing to keep in mind is to always remember that the best workout routine is one that you can stick to in the long run. Nevertheless, since ectomorph individuals are lean and lanky, and struggle to bulk, the best workouts for them would be strength training. Increasing strength will help ensure that one avoids injury while at the same time enhancing body functioning over time.

Naturally, you may want to gravitate toward something you're good at. Folks with lower body fat will excel in endurance exercises like running. However, this doesn't mean that you should focus solely on this exercise.

For a more balanced workout routine, consider incorporating high-intensity interval training (HIIT) or strength training. Besides enhancing your bone mineral density, strength training also boosts the efficiency of your muscular system. With time, you should expect to get more efficient in your exercises.

Since it's difficult for ectomorphs to build muscle, it's recommended to stick to compound movements instead of isolated movements. This helps a lot, as it works more muscle groups in one workout routine. For instance, bench press exercise will work on your chest muscles, shoulders, and

triceps. In contrast, bicep curls will only work on one muscle group: the bicep.

Cardio Exercises for Ectomorphs

- Running

Running is a recommended cardio exercise, not just for ectomorphs but also for other body types. The advantage of running is that it helps boost the strength of your skeletal muscles and overall body strength.

- Walking

Walking is also an ideal cardio exercise for ectomorphs. This is especially important for individuals with knee pains or other forms of joint issues.

- Swimming

Swimming is great for ectomorphs as it engages different muscles, including your shoulders, biceps, arms, quads, hamstrings, triceps, and calves. Generally, swimming is a great full-body workout.

- Cycling

Ectomorphs can also enjoy themselves outdoors cycling and burning fat. You can ask your friends and family to tag along to ensure that this is more exciting.

Strength/Weight Training for Ectomorphs

In terms of strength training, ectomorphs should focus on compound workouts. As previously noted, these are exercises that work on more than one muscle group. Recommended exercises here include:

- Lunges
- Push-ups
- Squats
- Planks
- Burpees

Endomorph Body Type

Individuals with endomorph body type usually have a slower metabolism, and this makes it easier for them to gain weight and harder to keep it off. A good exercise plan will help ensure that people with this body type achieve their fitness goals. One easy way to identify people with an endomorph body type is that they have soft, round bodies. In addition, they have a wide waist regardless of their height (Huizen, 2019).

Endomorph Exercises

Working out is an important part of any fitness plan for endomorphs looking to get in shape. Individuals with this body type should stick to well-rounded workout routines that feature both cardio and strength training activities.

Ideal cardio exercises include HIIT exercises for 30 minutes per session, two or three times per week. Steady-state training (SST) is also recommended for endomorphs. Basically, these are longer session workouts that feature moderate- to low-intensity routines. Some of these exercises include walking, jogging, swimming, and so on. Performing these exercises two to three times a week is advisable.

Strength training exercises for endomorphs include:

- Deadlift
- Squats
- Push-ups

Mesomorph Body Type

Mesomorph body types lie somewhere in between endomorph and ectomorph. Individuals with this body type can build muscle with ease and also have less tendency to store body fat compared to endomorphs. Naturally, mesomorphs excel in the weight room. These are individuals with more muscle mass and strength. Well, you might not think that you're a mesomorph currently because you've not been training for

some time now. However, if you start working out, you will quickly notice your muscles bulking within a short period.

Mesomorph Exercises

A mesomorph will gravitate toward weight training because this is an area they are best at. Initially, you might start working out by adopting certain fitness routines, but with time, you will notice that you love certain exercises compared to others. There is nothing wrong with foregoing certain workouts to maximize your gains. Nevertheless, it's strongly recommended that you incorporate other exercises besides strength training.

Apart from lifting weights at the gym, do remember to include cardio. After lifting weights in the gym, challenge yourself to perform cardio using your weight. This can be once or twice a week. Doing so helps to build your endurance and improve your respiratory system. Incorporating cardio has nothing to do with running every day, but it's more about focusing on your heart compared to focusing on just muscular gains.

Besides building strength and endurance, you should also think of improving your flexibility. This means doing your best to make sure your muscles can perform optimally. To achieve this, one should invest in post-exercises, such as static stretching. Taking care of your muscles and tendons helps to prevent injuries and also helps to prevent frequent plateau. Common stretching exercises here include quad stretch, calf stretch, lat stretch, arm stretch, and shoulder stretch.

How Body Type Affects Fitness Routine



The fact that you might be built differently should make you understand that certain exercises might work best for you compared to others. Ideally, your body type will affect the fitness routines you will adopt. This means that you should take time to understand your specific body type. Doing so guarantees that you spend more time doing the best exercises that suit your body type. Undeniably, it feels good when you're sure that you're doing the right thing that brings you closer to your fitness goals. What you don't want is to spend months working out only to realize that certain routines don't favor your body type.

Basically, if you're a lean ectomorph, the best fitness routine should be one that features resistance training and shorter HIIT exercises with your bodyweight. If you will be working out at the gym, go for exercises that focus on multiple muscle groups, such as the bench press or squats.

On the other hand, an endomorph's best approach should be to settle for workouts with a high volume of movement. Regular physical activity is a great way to kick off your fitness journey

if you're an endomorph. Try finding time for long walks or cycling. Strength training will also help build more muscle and increase your resting metabolism. In turn, this will increase the number of calories you burn every day even while resting.

Mesomorphs might be tempted to eat and drink whatever they want simply because they build muscle easily and store less fat. One might feel like they don't even need to exercise because they are physically fit, but it's important to commit yourself to a fitness routine. There is more to keeping fit than just having a nice body. Your health is paramount, and working out more often is the best way to living a healthier life. If you're a mesomorph, you should focus on achieving the most for the good body you have. Settle for exercises you enjoy and aim to challenge yourself from time to time.

You now understand that there is no one-size-fits-all approach when it comes to working out. It's important not to compare yourself to others when exercising to get in shape. Just because someone says their style of training is the best doesn't mean that it's also good for you. Naturally, you have a different body type, so before you think of adopting someone else's workout routine, do consider your body type and whether the exercises chosen suit you. Your body type affects the type of exercise routines you adopt. Make good use of this knowledge to develop a practical fitness program that will see you succeed and achieve your fitness goals.

Chapter 7: What NOT to Do When

Working Out

It's not surprising that the average person who begins exercising quits after only six months for different reasons such as failing to see results or lacking enough time to work out. Unfortunately, most people who give up quit even before seeing any results. This is not a surprising statistic given the common mistakes people make while working out. While you might have the best training program, the wrong posture or form can prevent you from achieving your fitness goals. To ensure that you don't fall into this trap, this section looks at the common mistakes people make when working out and how to avoid them.

Common Workout Mistakes People Make

All Quantity and No Quality

When working out at the gym, it's easy to point out the serious folks from other time wasters. If you've started hitting the gym, pay attention to how people work out. You will notice that only a few individuals get quality workouts. Most individuals wander aimlessly at the gym not knowing what to do or the right way to exercise. Some walk leisurely on the treadmill, while others lift very light weights, and they seem bored working out.

Most people simply go to the gym out of habit. Since you've developed a habit of going to the gym, you might avail yourself without necessarily pushing yourself to get results. At the end of the day, you only wasted time at the gym. A few months down the line, you wonder why you're not getting the results you want. To get the results you're after, you must

perform serious workouts. Of course, this doesn't mean that you won't enjoy working out. The point here is that you should focus more on what you're doing, whether at home or at the gym. It's vital that you make the most out of the little time you have to exercise. When you start exercising purposefully, you will have fun working out because you will spend half the time and get the results you are after.

Overestimating Your Exercise

Most individuals looking to get fit usually overestimate their workouts. Usually, they overestimate the amount of weight they lift, the exercise intensity and time, and the frequency of their exercises. Instead of overestimating things, do consider keeping an exercise log. Track all the exercises you perform at the gym or at home. After all, you want to see yourself improve. So, knowing the type of exercises and the time you spend working out is imperative. You can also use fitness applications to help you keep your records straight. Besides, these apps are also handy when it comes to setting your fitness goals.

Underestimating Your Eating

It's worth noting that you won't get fit by exercising alone. Most exercisers hit the gym with the wrong impression that they will lift weights, burn calories, and get fit. This is one common mistake you should avoid. Underestimating your eating will deter you from accomplishing your fitness goals. If you want to get in shape, you must be honest with yourself about your eating habits. It's important to eat the right foods that ensure you find it easier to lose weight and get fit. Journaling what you eat is equally important. While this might sound stressful, it does help you know whether you're eating ideal foods that promote weight loss. More about sticking to the right meals will be discussed in the next chapter.

Performing the Wrong Type of Workout

The way you perform your exercise routines matters a great deal. Perhaps you learned the current exercise routine by watching others at the gym. Maybe you gained some tips from your friends, the Internet, TV, or co-workers. In situations where you're not working out in the right way, you not only risk getting injured but you might fail to achieve the results you're after. The best way to learn is by working with a professional trainer. A qualified individual will help ensure that you get the right form directly from the word go. This makes it easy for you to get in shape without putting yourself at risk of getting injured or wasting time doing the wrong workouts.

Failing to Change Your Workout

Doing the same activity every day seems like a great way to exercise, but you should note that your body quickly adapts to the exercise routines. Therefore, you might notice that you're efficient in performing the same exercises day after day. This is not the best way of losing weight or getting in shape. Adapting to the same workout routines will only drive your body to hit a plateau. When this happens, you will fail to notice any changes. Worse, you might get bored with your training routines.

To prevent this plateau situation from happening to you, it's important to modify your workouts more often. Follow a certain routine for a week and switch things up the following week. By keeping your body guessing, it will never adapt to the routines you follow, and this means you're more likely to achieve your goals.

Setting Unrealistic Goals

How realistic are your fitness goals? Setting realistic goals is the surest way to keep yourself motivated. If you want to lose 30 pounds a month, ask yourself how realistic your goals are. The most important thing is to be honest with yourself about your level of commitment, your abilities, and your lifestyle. Evaluate your abilities and ensure that you start where you are

and seek to progress every day. If you're out exercising at the gym or at home, always ensure that you make it count. Don't just waste your time.

Incorrect Form or Technique

You will only get ideal fitness results by working out in the right way. Form is very important, especially when performing strength training workouts. The following are common mistakes exercisers make while doing strength training.

Bicep Curl

Curls are a common exercise routine at the gym. While most people think that they perform this exercise the right way, most of them are wrong. Often, curls require one to move one joint. However, folks have a way of cheating their way out. You might find someone thrusting their hips to help swing the weights close to their shoulders. This is the wrong way of performing bicep curls. Besides shortchanging your results, you put yourself at risk of getting injured in the process.

Bicep curls are not just about lifting heavy weights. This is a small muscle group, hence lifting light weights and maintaining the right form is key. With light weights, you won't have to swing your body forward to get the momentum you need to lift weights. Focus on moving your forearms and hands.

For a perfect bicep curl, stand straight with your feet shoulder-width apart. While in this position, your hips should be in line with your ankles and shoulders. Keep your eyes looking straight ahead and your back flat.

Hold light dumbbells by your thighs with your palms facing forward. Keeping your elbows slightly tucked, slowly curl the weights toward your shoulders, and squeeze your bicep. After that, lower the weights and perform the same movement with the other arm.

Dips

Another technique most people struggle to grasp is dips. The main issue is that most people keep their torso vertical and

they fail to drop low enough. Making these mistakes only worsens things as it puts a strain on your shoulders.

To perform dips the right way, start by grabbing the dip handles. Next, press the dip handles downward with the support of your shoulders. While doing this, focus on pulling your shoulder blades back. Once you're elevated from the ground, cross your ankles. This should be your starting position.

With your elbows tucked and forearms vertical, slightly lean your torso forward and lower your body. Lower your body until your upper arms are parallel to the ground. Pause for a moment and repeat the movement.

Squat

Squats are an important strength training routine that you should incorporate in your program. A common mistake people make is bending forward and caving their knees inward. Some also allow their heels to get off the ground.

The right squat technique demands that you stand tall with your feet shoulder-width apart. Do ensure that your weight is on your heels. Now, with your back flat, lower yourself, pushing your hips back until they are parallel to the floor. Ensure you don't lose your alignment while lowering your body. Also, make sure your knees do not cave inward and your heels are rooted to the floor. Move back to the starting position and repeat the same movement.

If you have a knee problem that prevents you from making a complete movement, eliminate weights and perform the exercise without weights. You can also adjust your stance or elevate your heels using a board.

Plank

Planks will help strengthen your core, but you need to do it right for you to reap the best results. A common mistake folks make is allowing their hips to sag or raising them too high. This strains the lower back; thus, the right form is very important.

To prevent these common issues while performing planks, always make sure that your head, upper back, and butt are straight. The point is not to allow your hips to sag, and your arms should be straight while starting this workout routine. For maximum gains, do ensure you engage your core muscles.

Push-Up

Again, people will perform push-ups the wrong way by sagging their hips and flaring their elbows. Some individuals also widen their shoulders more than 45 degrees and this only makes them strain their shoulders while performing this exercise. Allowing your hips to sag also strains your lower back.

For the best push-up movement, start in a plank position with your arms slightly wider than your shoulders. Tighten your core and clench your glutes. While in this position, your head to heels should be straight.

Look down, tuck your elbows, and lower your body until it's close to the floor. Pause for a second, and push yourself back to the starting position.

Fitness Tips to Maximize Your Results

Apart from knowing what you shouldn't be doing at the gym, it's also good to point out some of the things you can do to triple your workout effectiveness. The last thing you need is to spend countless hours at the gym and getting frustrated in the process. To get the most out of the time you spend working out, incorporate the following pointers in your training program.

Train Mindfully



It's normal to find yourself thinking of other things while at the gym. Our minds tend to wander, especially when you're training for the sake of it. The problem here is that you will only push yourself to get over the activity and resume other important activities for the day. You need to train mindfully. This means thinking about the muscles you're training. Listen to your body as you perform certain exercises. This helps to make sure that you're performing the right workout by following the recommended form. Over time, you will notice great improvements because you focus more on performing workouts in the best way possible.

Lift Weights

Cardio is important, but performing cardio alone will only sabotage your fitness results. To up your metabolism, you need to lift weights. Losing weight and getting in shape calls for an

improved metabolism. This is where lifting weights comes in handy. It might not be easy at first, but with time, your body adjusts into your fitness program, and you should expect to notice body changes by then.

High-Intensity Workouts

When you're new to any workout program, it's best to start slow. If you're cycling or running, for example, start by working on your endurance for at least four weeks before adding in more intense routines. Once your body adjusts, step up the intensity to get the most of your workouts.

Eat Carbs Before Working Out

Research shows that consuming carbs before working out can help improve your performance (Fetters, 2016). Carbs are the body's source of fuel, which means that consuming these foods can help provide your body with the energy it needs to perform different exercises. So, even when working out in the morning, try your best to snack on some carbs before heading out.

Hydrate



Drinking plenty of water throughout the day is also recommended. Losing body weight in fluids will affect your performance and make you work even harder. Worse, you might also struggle recovering after working out. It's advisable to drink approximately a half to one ounce of water per pound of your body weight (Fetters, 2016). Make it a habit of hydrating more often during the day. You don't have to wait until you start exercising for you to drink water. Carry a bottle of water with you to increase the likelihood of staying hydrated.

Get Enough Sleep

Getting enough sleep is integral to reaping maximum benefits from your training routine. Poor sleep affects how well your body burns calories. It also affects performance since you might not recover fully if you fail to get the right amount of sleep. This shouldn't be difficult for you if you develop healthy sleep patterns. You've often heard that the best way to

get enough sleep is to retire early to bed. Forget about binge-watching as a way of relaxing before you catch some sleep. The blue light from electronic devices negatively affects the quality of sleep you get, so it's more advisable to read a book instead to ensure that your circadian rhythms are not affected.

Switch Things Up

Why don't you also try switching things up to make sure you don't get bored with your workout routines? What's more, the idea of incorporating different exercises also helps to prevent stagnating. For instance, instead of just hitting the gym to squat, try using your bodyweight with other high-intensity workouts. Your muscles will adjust faster, and within no time, your endurance would be at its peak. When this happens, you will start enjoying your workouts because you're always out to challenge your body.

Find an Accountability Partner

More importantly, find an accountability partner. Having someone to cheer you up while working out is the best form of motivation you can get. At times, your partner will motivate you to exercise longer and push heavier weights. This translates to better performance at the gym or at home. You only need to find someone with similar fitness goals.

Getting in shape is never as challenging as most people think. With the right technique working for you, you should find it relatively easy to notice body changes. When you're not sure about how to perform certain workout routines, it's always important to seek professional help from a trainer. Doing so will help you prevent common injuries most people struggle with, especially when they are starting their fitness programs. Another vital reminder that will guarantee you improve your performance is eating mindfully. You are what you eat. To achieve your fitness goals, eating right should never be overlooked. More about nutrition is discussed in detail in the next chapter. Read on!

Chapter 8: Incorporate the Right

Nutrition

Up until this point, you understand what you need to get fit. Exercising is a terrific start to getting in shape, but without the right foods, you might fail to achieve your fitness goals. Food is a source of fuel. When working out, you need to eat the right foods to provide your body with the fuel it needs to boost your performance. Unfortunately, most people overlook the importance of settling for the right foods when working out. Most individuals choose to eat “convenience” foods, including frozen meals, canned soups, soda, and boxed side dishes. Only a small fraction consume healthy and wholesome foods from plant and animal products (Aben, 2018).

If you’re serious about getting fit, you need to choose healthier food options. The foods you eat combined with the exercises you perform will have an impact on your fitness goals. Protein, carbs, and fats provide the essential nutrients the body needs to function optimally. Usually, these foods provide energy to sustain you during and after workouts. On the other hand, minerals, vitamins, fiber, and antioxidants nourish cells within your body, hence also providing ideal fuel for your workouts.

You can think of your body like a car: By pouring the best fuel, you increase the car’s performance while at the same time enhancing the engine’s overall longevity. The same way, your body will perform at its best with the right type of sources of fuel.

The right form of nutrition starts with knowing what you should eat, when you should eat, and developing healthy eating habits in the long run. The following paragraphs will explain in detail the right type of foods you should eat and the ideal way of consuming these foods.

Food as Medicine



Superfoods or nutrient-dense foods include healthy carbs, fats, and lean proteins. These foods are rich sources of minerals, vitamins, and antioxidants, not forgetting the fact that they also provide the body with important calories. Antioxidants are known to help prevent or reduce inflammation, and they also help the body fight off common diseases and illnesses. Powerful antioxidants from leafy greens and veggies protect the cells from potential damage. Some foods also have vital compounds that enhance our metabolism, such as red peppers. Consequently, increasing your intake of these foods can help increase the fat burning rate.

What It Means to Eat Healthy

Never Skip Breakfast



If exercise is on your agenda, you should never skip breakfast. This is the first meal of the day, and it determines how well your body powers your brain and muscles. The idea of sticking to a healthy breakfast routine has been linked to a reduced risk of heart disease, diabetes, and obesity (Kilroy, 2019). One of the main issues with skipping breakfast is that it can leave you feeling lethargic or lightheaded during your workouts.

Choosing healthy food options as you start the day is very important. Most individuals simply settle for simple carbs. What they fail to realize is that carbs won't keep them full for long. You might think that a donut or a plain white bagel will do, but you will have to reach out for snacks even before lunch hour.

On the contrary, protein- and fiber-dense foods tend to keep you satiated. This means that it will take you some time before thinking of eating snacks. The best part is that these foods are

excellent sources of energy, especially now that exercise is part of your to-do list.

For a healthy breakfast, avoid reaching out for sugar-laden cereals. Instead, choose oat bran, oatmeal, or other forms of whole grain cereals rich in fiber. You should also think of adding in some protein foods, such as yogurt, milk, or chopped nuts.

If you're one of those individuals who love the taste of pancakes in the morning, you should replace the all-purpose flour with whole grain varieties. After that, you can stir in some cottage cheese. The idea here is to ensure that you're providing the body with ideal food options for maximum gains.

Toast lovers should also settle for whole grain bread. You can mix this with peanut butter, eggs, or any other protein source of your choice.

Eat the Right Carbs

The low-carb diets that have flooded the Internet have given carbohydrates a bad rap. But you should include carbs in your diet as they are the body's main source of fuel. Research shows that approximately 45–65% of your total caloric needs come from carbs. This is even more important if you're looking to get fit (Kilroy, 2019).

Not all carbs are equal. For this reason, you need to know the best carbs that will promote weight loss or the fitness goals you've set for yourself. Naturally occurring sugars such as lactose in dairy, fructose in fruit, refined grains like white rice, and sugars added to foods are rapidly broken down by the body. In other words, these foods provide the body with almost instant energy. The only problem is that these foods do not last in your body for long. Unless they are combined with other vital nutrients, they are simply empty calories consumed. Other forms of carbs, like those found in veggies, whole grains, and legumes, take longer to be processed. Consuming more of these foods provides your body with a steady supply of fuel throughout the day.

While some carbs are high in calories, such as cupcakes, that's not always the case for healthier carb options. Fruits and vegetables, for example, are low in calories and they are rich in minerals and vitamins. Some carbs also have moderate levels of calories and nutrients. Whole grains, for instance, are rich in calories and nutrients.

In essence, while striving to get fit, you need to cut down on refined grains and added sugars. You should also add in other healthy carbs to ensure you're providing the body with varying sources of nutrients from different food sources.

What Happens When You Eat Carbs?

The question of consuming carbs is a strongly debated topic over the Internet, hence it's important to delve into the issue and help you understand what actually happens. When you consume carbs, the body breaks down these foods into sugars (fructose, glucose, and galactose). Depending on the body's energy requirements, the sugars can be used immediately or stored in the form of glycogen for later use. Similarly, consuming carbs also triggers the body to release insulin. Insulin here helps to regulate blood sugar in your system.

The ease of breaking down the sugars largely depends on the type of carbs consumed. Simple carbs are normally broken down easily, and they are immediately absorbed into the bloodstream. These foods give one short burst of energy before one feels drained a while later. Classic examples here include white rice, white bread, bagels, cereals low on fiber, and candy—basically, most of these foods are designed to get you hooked. You will want to consume these foods because of their rewarding nature. The short bursts of energy will influence you to turn to them every time you feel low on energy.

Conversely, complex carbs' food sources, such as whole grains, fruits, and veggies, take time to be processed. One advantage of these foods is that they help curb your appetite, which means they help in weight management.

With this information on carbohydrates, you might be wondering whether you should consume these foods right

before or after working out. The idea here is that you want to provide your body with fuel to improve your performance, so it makes a lot of sense to consume carbs before working out. However, this is not always the case since you might exercise for a few minutes. Some experts, however, recommend eating half a banana or whole grain toast 45–60 minutes before exercising. This helps provide your body with quick energy.

If you're looking to exercise for longer, say more than 90 minutes, consuming carbs is also recommended. Doing so will provide the body with an ideal fuel source to perform at your best. You can settle for simple, healthy carb options before heading out to the gym. Generally, the type of workout will also determine whether you need to up your carb intake.

After the workout, you should also consider eating proteins and some complex carbs. The regrowth and repair of your muscles is not just meant for proteins. Since complex carbs are not easily broken down, they can help restore the lost glycogen and other fluids. Choose these carbs from a wide range of fruits, veggies, and grains. Mix these with protein sources to help muscle recovery and growth.

Proteins for Optimal Fitness

Adding proteins to your diet is another important thing to consider. Protein forms the building blocks for the body and it also helps in muscle recovery and repair. Consuming the right amount of protein is therefore important to your workout routines. Various proteins are also an ideal source of energy, especially in situations where carbs are in short supply, but make sure to understand that proteins are not a major source of fuel when working out.

The notion that proteins provide a wide array of health benefits doesn't mean that you should buy huge buckets of supplements to meet your daily protein requirements. There are important factors that should be considered to meet your protein requirements, and this varies from one person to the other. For instance, your level of physical activity and age are worth considering. Studies indicate that adults should consume approximately 0.36 grams of protein daily for every pound of

bodyweight. Older adults and exercisers might need more (Kilroy, 2019).

When looking to meet your protein requirements, it's important to understand that people have different needs. This means that eating tons of chicken, protein bars, and downing protein shakes will not magically add muscle to your body. Quite the contrary, resistance training is what helps you bulk or that it adds lean muscle to your body. The main role of proteins in your body is to repair the muscles that get damaged while training. Effective working out combined with the right protein intake is what helps to build muscle.

Increase Your Fruit and Vegetable Intake

Besides eating carbs and proteins, adding in more fruits and veggies is a safe and healthy way to keep fit. Diets rich in fruits and veggies also lower the risk for certain lifestyle-related complications such as cancer. You should aim to fill half of your plate with these foods at every meal. Most people overcomplicate things and assume that consuming fruits and veggies at every meal is costly and inconvenient, but this doesn't have to be the case.

There are simple and interesting ways of ensuring you don't skimp on your fruit and vegetable needs. For instance, you can kick off your morning with some citrus, melon and berries on your cereal, oatmeal, or yogurt. You can also add in some peppers, spinach, and tomatoes if savory is your style. More importantly, you should never leave sandwiches out of the party. Add in a layer of tomatoes, sprouts, avocado, peppers, onions, and more to your whole grain bread. You will fill up in a healthy way. So, it's all about knowing how to mix things up. Feel free to experiment with fruits and veggies you usually like.



Fats and Exercise

Like carbs, fats have also received a bad rap over the past few years. What's more alarming is the fact that people have turned to refined carbs, more sugar, and processed foods. The effects are evident all around us with people struggling to deal with health and overweight issues. Dieters have rushed to the Internet seeking quick fixes to reduce weight and get fit, but the answer to most weight loss issues is not eliminating fat from our diets. Instead, people should understand that our bodies need fat.

Approximately 20—35% of your everyday caloric requirements should be from fat (Braum, 2019). The more calories you burn, the more you need to replenish with fat and other food sources. While there are limited studies showing that fats help enhance performance, consuming healthy fats is an integral aspect of consuming enough calories that the body needs. Moreover, healthy fats help to curb your appetite, which means you're less likely to turn to junk. Needless to say, it's not all bad news when consuming healthy fats.

The reason why fats satiate so well is because they take longer to digest. This means that eating healthy fats can help manage your weight in the long run. Knowing how to separate healthy fats from unhealthy fats guarantees that you steer clear of foods that have a negative impact on your fitness goals. Excess trans fats and saturated fats, for example, are not good for your training regimen and your overall health. Eating more of these fats will only lead to weight gain.

While eating healthy fats is strongly recommended, it should be noted that timing is crucial. Since fats take time to digest, you should eat these foods a few hours before exercising. Ideal fat sources during training include nuts, seeds, avocado, olive oil, and salmon. Some of the foods to avoid include bacon, butter, and packaged desserts.

Timing Your Meals

Timing is everything when it comes down to mealtimes. When you eat is equally as important as what you eat. What this means is that you should be mindful of the times when you consume vital calories. Given the high obesity prevalence rates, there is no doubt that the current lifestyle recommendations by most experts are not as effective. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), obesity prevalence between 2017 and 2018 was 42.4%—this represents an increase from 30.5% in 2000 (CDC, 2021). These numbers speak volumes that the lifestyle recommendations that people are getting these days are not working.

Nevertheless, meal timing seems promising compared to dietary recommendations. One study found that meal timing had a large impact on body mass index (BMI). Based on this study, it was clear that individuals with the lowest BMIs fasted for over 18 hours between dinner and breakfast. On the contrary, those with larger BMIs fasted for shorter periods (Helmer 2018).

The science of intermittent fasting can help in better understanding the impact of meal timing on losing weight or

keeping fit, for that matter. Intermittent fasting (IF) refers to an eating plan where dieters switch between an eating window and fasting on a regular schedule. Evidence suggests that intermittent fasting does help in better weight management for most people. It can also help in reversing common forms of lifestyle-related ailments (Johns Hopkins Medicine , 2021).

Essentially, intermittent fasting focuses more on when you eat as compared to what you eat. The idea of staying without food for several hours each day or eating a single meal on several days during the week can help enhance the rate at which the body burns fat. Scientific evidence also suggests that there are additional benefits of such fasting.

Naturally, our bodies can go without food for hours. During prehistoric times, this is what our ancestors used to do as they were hunters and gathers. People had to survive which meant going without food for hours or even days. Interestingly, even before the advent of the Internet and other forms of media, people found it easier to manage their weight. There were no TVs, and people had to sleep early. With regard to food portions, they were much smaller compared to what most people eat today. What's more, individuals used to engage in more physical activities, which means they exercised more.

Things have changed over time and people have access to 24/7 entertainment through the Internet, TV, and other media forms. People also spend countless hours either binging on their favorite shows, chatting on social media pages, or playing games. The sedentary lifestyles we've adopted have changed the way we live. We sit all day and snack.

The extra calories we accumulate during the day combined with less activity means an increased risk of type 2 diabetes, obesity, and heart attack. Research shows that the best way of reversing these trends is through intermittent fasting (Johns Hopkins Medicine, 2021).

Before you think of trying intermittent fasting, it's vital that you consult with your doctor. Once you get their go-ahead, the practice can be incorporated into your daily eating routine. The best part is that this form of fasting is a flexible approach, and you can use any approach that works for you.

Here are common ways to do intermittent fasting:

The 16/8 Method

This intermittent fasting approach is where one goes without food for 16 hours and limits their feeding period to about eight hours. During the feeding period, one can add smaller meals in between.

The 5:2 Diet

The 5:2 diet refers to an eating plan where one eats normally for five days of the week and restricts their caloric intake for two days during the same week. The number of calories consumed should be restricted to about 500–600.

Eat Stop Eat

Eat stop eat is where a dieter fasts once or twice weekly. Here, one can fast from breakfast to breakfast the following day to make up a complete cycle of 24 hour fasting period.

Alternate-Day Fasting

Alternate-day fasting involves fasting every other day. Evidence suggests that this form of fasting is not as effective, as one might struggle going without food on their fasting days (Gunnars, 2021).

The Warrior Diet

The warrior diet stands out in the sense that a dieter is required to consume fruits and veggies during the day and one heavy meal at night.

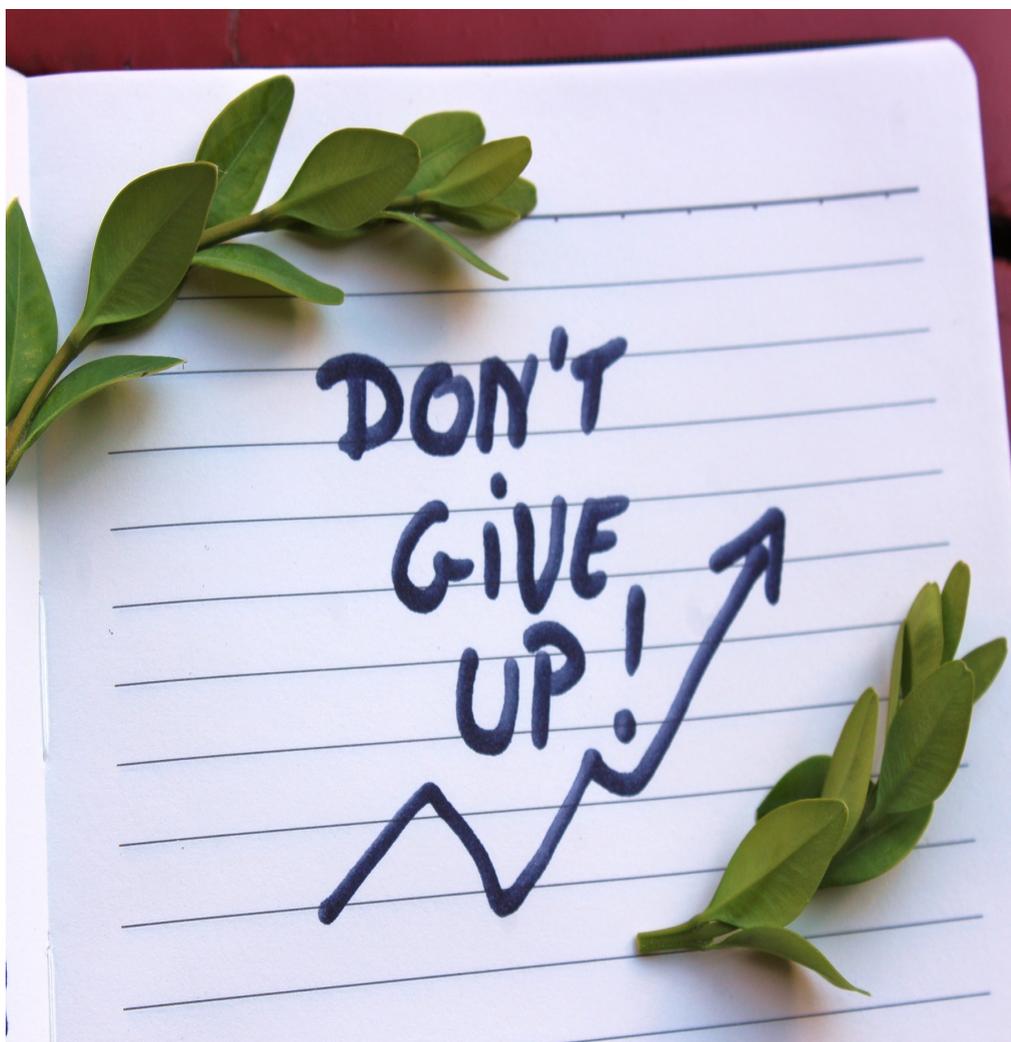
Spontaneous Meal Skipping

With spontaneous meal skipping, one doesn't have to stick to any plan to fast successfully. The idea here is to skip meals whenever you feel like it. For instance, you can choose to skip lunch when you don't feel hungry or when you're too busy to prepare yourself a hearty meal.

Your meal timing can make a huge difference to your fitness goals. If you're looking to lose weight and get in shape, one ideal approach is by trying out intermittent fasting. You don't need to complicate the whole idea of fasting. Simply skip

meals when you don't feel like eating. Over time, your body will adjust, and you will find it easier to stay without food for hours. Start slow as you work toward adjusting your mealtimes to suit your health and fitness goals. Remember, there is no one-size-fits-all approach when it comes to getting fit. You can always devise a program that works best for you.

Chapter 9: Don't Give Up



Your time is valuable, and for each minute you spend working out, you want to get the results that you strongly desire. However, you must wake up to the realization that you will not always be in the mood to exercise. Worse, it might get to a point where you think that working out is not meant for you. This might start off as mere procrastination for a few days. Before you know it, months have passed, and you haven't followed your workout routine as you had promised yourself.

Arguably, it's easy to feel like giving up when everything you're doing doesn't seem to work for you. Every time you hit the gym or try to follow a certain program, life seems to get in the way, and you can't get yourself to exercise. What should you do when you're at this breaking point? Should you just

give up and focus more on other ways of making yourself happy?

Excuses will always be there. If you can't push yourself to work out, you will surely have tons of excuses not to hit the gym or not to exercise at home. However, with a little push, you can get your groove back. This chapter focuses on the ways you can motivate yourself to work out even when you don't feel like it.

Why You Shouldn't Give Up Exercising

You Can't Give Up on You

The moment you decided to start working out, you made an important commitment to yourself. Sure, we have distinct reasons why we choose to exercise, but the most important thing is knowing that you will not give up on your goals. Once you start working out, you will enjoy the perks of training. Your overall health and well-being will improve. You will feel good about yourself and the fact that you're not relenting in your health and fitness goals.

Now, flip this to the other side, and you will drastically alter your mood. The fact that you can't push yourself to exercise more often will take a huge toll on you. Your confidence level will drop and chances are that you will be unhappy simply because you can't seem to get anything done. What this means is that you can't give up on your fitness goals because doing so will ultimately be giving up on you. You shouldn't think of giving up—not for a moment. You should convince yourself that this is the only way that will guarantee you live a healthier and more fulfilling life. Your health is your wealth, so let nothing stop you from going for your health goals.

Your Body Is Perfect



One big mistake we usually make when working hard to burn calories and get fit is that we focus more on what we don't like about our bodies overall. When you think about exercising your body, perhaps the first thing that comes to mind is your muffin top. Maybe you often worry about the cellulite on your thighs; you can't get your mind off the fact that it might take ages for you to get rid of it permanently.

Instead of focusing on what you don't like about your body, why don't you focus more on expressing gratitude? Appreciate your body. Wake up every morning with positive affirmations reminding yourself of how beautiful you are. Gratitude can be a great motivational tool to keep you going even when your motivation seems to fade away. This strategy works because meeting your fitness goals revolves around training your mind to think positively about your fitness journey. That said, there is no reason for you to give up. Always give thanks and aim to make exercise a part of your daily life.

You Can Change What You Can

We all have those days when we feel completely off. In spite of what you do, there are things you can't escape, be it the manic Monday or the terrible Thursday you often dread. Your moods can easily be affected by how things turn out in your life. Usually, most of these circumstances are beyond our control, but you shouldn't be worried about what you can't control. Instead, you can focus more on what you can do to improve your overall health and well-being.

Every time you need a pep talk, you can turn to your training partners. Opening up to your gym partners can help lift your spirits, and you will enjoy working out. Committing yourself to your fitness goals requires that you understand the importance of accepting the challenges you face along the way. There is nothing wrong with feeling like giving up. We all go through this phase—it's simply part of life. You can easily stand out by devoting yourself to loving your body and making the best out of it. Eventually, the results will be massive.

You Have a Unique Body Type

Another reason not to give up on your fitness goals is because you have a unique body type. In "Specific Workouts for Specific Body Types," we looked at the different body types, how it can affect your workout routines, and how fast you can lose or gain weight. With this in mind, you shouldn't be discouraged when you fail to notice results after working out for some time. Sure, it's frustrating not to see yourself lose weight and get in shape, but your body type is different. This means you should keep going. Your best move should be to switch up exercises that suit your body type. You should also consider eating the right foods that support your weight loss or fitness goals. At the end of the day, your body will respond. You just need to be patient and continue following the routine that works for you.

There Is More to Getting Fit Than Losing Weight

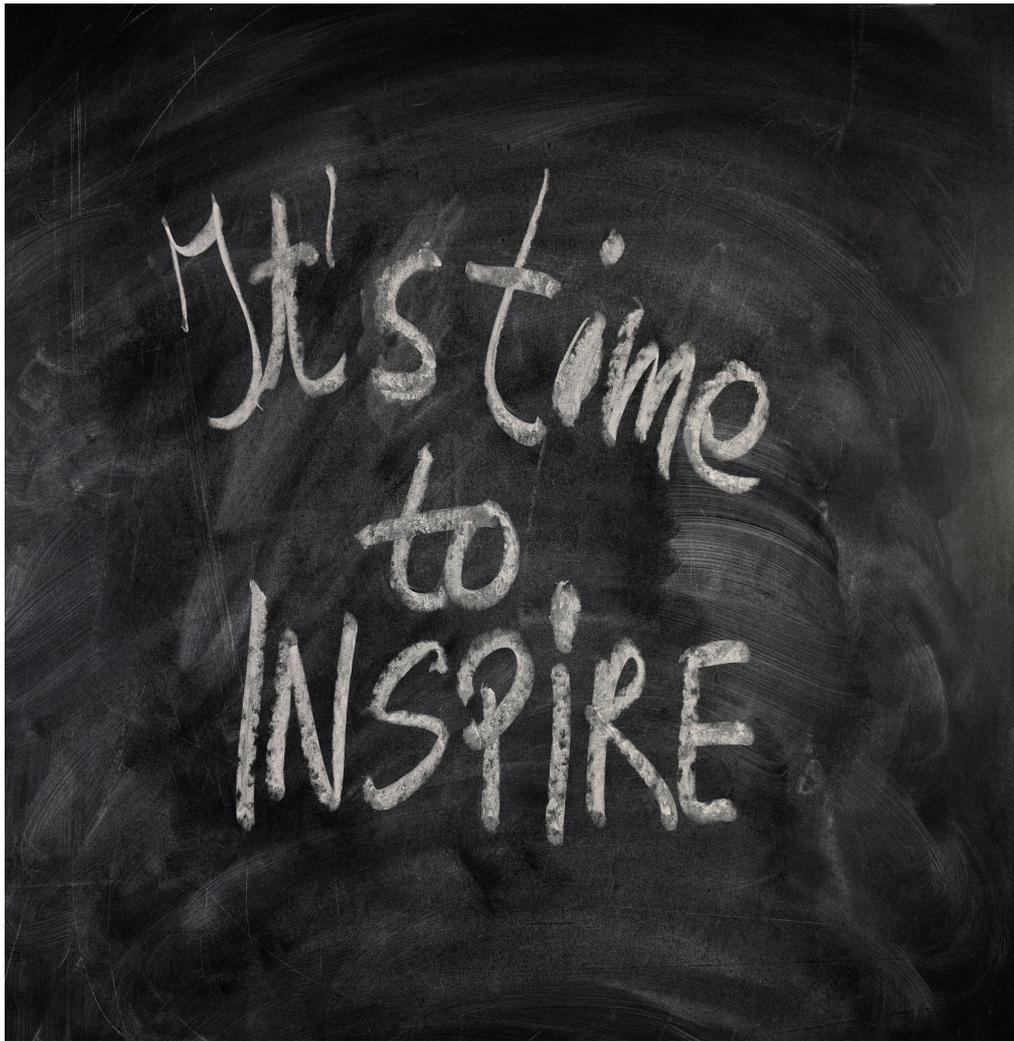
The whole idea of getting fit is not necessarily about solely losing weight. Forget about the numbers on the weighing scale for a moment, and focus on the big picture. Even when you fail to lose weight as you had planned, you will get fit and reap the benefits of working out regularly. You need to accept the fact that you don't have to be an athlete for you to notice the benefits of working out. Regular exercise keeps you in a great condition. Expect your life to transform in different facets.

Prove It to Yourself

Think about those bad days when you won't hit the gym or even wake up in the morning to exercise. During these days, no one else will bear the negative feelings that come with breaking the rules you initially set for yourself. A great way of staying motivated is by setting realistic goals. Quit trying to adopt a lifestyle that doesn't favor you. If you only have two or three days to work out, that should work. Don't sweat it—it's better to train for two days than failing to train at all.

Aim to be the best version of yourself. You might fail to work out today and tomorrow, but commit yourself to working out at least twice before the week finishes. The more you keep trying, the better you get at what you do. Prove it to yourself that you can take charge of your health. Silence the inner critic that keeps discouraging you when you feel you can't do it. Of course you can—nothing should stop you!

You Can Inspire Others



Have you ever watched an inspiring weight loss journey on YouTube, Facebook, or other digital platforms? Watching people make major life transformations and taking charge of their health is rewarding. Without realizing it, you can be one of those individuals who inspires others to take their fitness journey seriously. By changing the way you perceive exercise and involve your family and friends, you can change someone's life. It's a rewarding feeling that will also keep you motivated. What's more, knowing that there are people who admire you can also help overcome the pressure to quit.

Tricking Yourself to Work Out When Things Get Rough

Apart from knowing why you shouldn't quit exercising, it's also vital to equip yourself with a few tricks you can use to

trick yourself into working out when you don't feel like it.

Find an Extra Reason “Why”

Sometimes we want to give up on our fitness goals because we forget quickly why we started. After working out for several months, you might lose focus and want to quit altogether. To prevent this from happening, your best approach is to find an extra reason “why.” For instance, you can turn to your social media pages and connect with other people who are taking good care of their bodies. While doing this, look for different workouts that you can incorporate into your routine to make things more exciting. The new exercises you bring in will reignite the motivation you once had when you started.

Reflect on Where You've Been

It's also important to remind yourself of the journey you've been through to this point. Maybe you've lost 10 pounds or 20 pounds. Reflecting on the small achievements you've made can inspire you to keep going. Take pictures more often to remind you of your accomplishments. Every time you feel like giving up, take out these pictures, as they will be an important reminder that you don't want to get your old body back. The good feelings tied to your achievements will fuel you not to even think of quitting.

Make Short Workouts Harder

Develop a philosophy where you convince yourself that the less time you have to exercise, the harder it will be. If you only have 15 minutes to work out, it means that you will have to engage in a high-intensity workout within this short period. Developing this mentality will motivate you to find more time to exercise, as this will ensure that you don't have to perform HIIT routines. On the other hand, when you don't have much time to work out, you will not be tempted to procrastinate since you have the right strategy to use the little time you have.

Reward Yourself

It always feels good when there is something you look up to after completing a certain task. Be creative and reward yourself with something good after successfully completing your workout routine for the week. Certainly, this doesn't mean binging on unhealthy foods. You don't want to consume all the calories you struggled to burn during the week. So, do consider rewarding yourself with other exciting things. For example, buy yourself a new pair of shoes you will use the next time you hit the gym. These simple rewards will keep you motivated toward accomplishing your mini fitness goals.

Develop Your Personal Mantra

The type of self-talk you have with yourself will also have an impact on your level of motivation. Why should you be your greatest enemy instead of championing for yourself to become the best version of yourself? Create a personal mantra that will help you envision the success you are after. You want to lose 10 pounds in three months? Speak to yourself positively as if you've already achieved this feat. Playing tricks with your subconscious mind can be the way out to staying motivated even when the road gets bumpy. Tell yourself that you're happy with your body and that you're more confident. Find something that motivates you, and keep it handy when you need some extra push to keep going.

Undeniably, there are many reasons not to give up on your fitness goals. Giving up is not an option. You need to prove to yourself that you can take up this challenge and better your life. Maybe you've been struggling for some time now to get fit, but nothing has worked. Well, forget what happened and use the recommended strategies in this guide to get your groove back. The most crucial thing to remember is that there is more to getting fit than just losing weight. You don't have to lose all the pounds you gained over time for you to start enjoying life once again.

Besides, you have a unique body type, and losing weight slowly doesn't mean that you should quit. The little time you have to exercise will also make a huge difference to your goals. It's better to work out for 10 minutes instead of procrastinating. One more thing to keep at the back of your mind is that you have a wonderful body. Stop focusing on things you don't like about yourself. Express gratitude for the beautiful body you have. You need these positive emotions to flow within you if you keep working toward your ultimate goal to keep fit. Last but not least, working out more often might be an inspiration to someone else, and it's rewarding to know that you imparted the lives of other people positively. Keep fighting!

Chapter 10: Dieting, Calorie Counting, and Strength Training

You're now ready to hit the ground running. Getting fit is not for the faint of heart. There's no doubt that you've made up your mind about how you will stop at nothing until you achieve your fitness goals. Well, congratulations on getting the mental clarity you need to take on your fitness journey without looking back. From the previous chapter, you now know that there's no reason why you should give up. Prove it to yourself that you can change your life by simply working toward getting fit. There is a lot to benefit from ensuring that you make exercise a ritual part of your life.

To become the best, you need to do what other admirable folks do when it comes to losing weight and keeping fit. What this means is that you need to eat right, exercise regularly, and stay motivated. It sounds simple but difficult to implement what is required from your end. In this section, you will learn a few tricks that will help you achieve your goals sooner than you expected.

Dieting

Your diet will determine how fast you burn fat, lose weight, and build muscle in the long run. Depending on your goals, you will have to settle for different diet plans. However, dieting is not that easy, especially when you have to keep track of what you eat every day. Despite this, it doesn't have to be this daunting. You should note that you can't change everything overnight. If losing weight is your goal, it means you should focus more on sustainable weight loss. Here, you need to focus on the long-term goal: to lose weight and keep it off.

However, when looking to get fit, chances are that you're more interested in burning fat as opposed to just losing weight.

Most people are never sure how they can build muscle while at the same time losing weight. It's possible, though.



Burn More Fat

When you hear people talking about losing weight, in most cases, these individuals want to burn fat. Losing weight is somewhat different because shedding off the pounds means that you might lose both muscle and fat. When this happens, your body gets smaller, and since you lack muscle, your body won't have the good physique that most individuals desire.

An athletic-toned physique is achieved by having muscle definition. Instead of chasing a weight loss goal, you should think of burning more fat instead. The challenge here involves ensuring that the body burns fat while keeping your lean muscle or building it. This is where the importance of calorie counting comes in. A rule of thumb when burning fat and building muscle is to ensure that you consume fewer calories than the body expels.

By following the right diet and exercise plan, you can build muscle and burn fat simultaneously. Typically, people never comprehend how this is possible because one needs extra calories to gain weight and a calorie deficit to shed off some pounds. These two concepts seem contradicting, and that is

why individuals tend to think it's not possible to build muscle and burn fat simultaneously.

Research shows that men consuming food in a 40% energy deficit while performing resistance training, HIIT, and taking in a high-protein diet increased their lean body mass. Similarly, another study showed that women who engaged in resistance training and ate a high-protein diet ended up building muscle and losing fat (Hosie, 2020). It's very possible to achieve both goals at the same time.

Increase Your Protein Intake

The amount of proteins you consume depends on your body fat levels. If you have more fat to burn, you need to go for a calorie-deficit plan. On the other hand, if you do not have much body fat to burn, maintaining your caloric consumption will be okay. Keep in mind that consuming fewer calories might make it challenging for you to keep your muscle.

Upping your protein intake is vital for body composition. What's more, the leaner tissue you have, the more likely you will overcome negative body adaptations like decreased metabolism.

The amount of other micronutrients you get from other foods is not as important. The key issue here is to ensure that you provide your body with enough fuel to maintain optimal health and energy. On that note, you should stick to healthier food options, including whole, unprocessed foods and plenty of fruits and veggies.

Incorporate Resistance Training

Resistance training is highly recommended to burn more fat and build muscle. Training with heavy weights will help you bulk in no time, and if you're sticking to a calorie-deficit plan, you can be sure to build more muscle. Aim to increase the amount of weight you lift. This is often termed as progressive overload. If you started with eight reps during the first few weeks or months, strive for 10–12 reps. The gradual improvements you notice will also motivate you to keep going for heavier weights.

Newbie gains are a common thing while performing resistance training. If you're serious with how you train and what you eat, you can be sure to notice quick body transformations. With time, the more advanced you get at the gym or any form of training, the harder you need to push your body.

Take Baby Steps

Expect to face several challenges while making dietary changes. Your goal should be to make small, gradual changes that you can stick to over the long haul. In fact, an ideal approach is to make one change every week. Doing so helps to make sure that your body has time to adjust and adapt to your new eating plans. Over time, do your best to establish healthy eating habits that will support your fitness goals.

Now that you're motivated to get fit, you do not have to change everything all at once. Start by stocking the refrigerator and cupboards with healthy foods. You should also think about creating more time to prepare your own meals at home. Dining out might sound to be a great way of saving time, but in most cases you will not eat in a healthy way, forgetting the fact that you might be served bigger portions.

Reward, Don't Punish

Another crucial dieting tip to bear in mind is that you should keep yourself motivated. Avoid beating yourself up when you slip. Set mini-goals that you can accomplish every day or at the end of the week. When this happens, celebrate the accomplishments. Losing even as little as five pounds or hitting the gym twice a week can make a huge difference. Don't be overwhelmed with what others are doing to get in shape—what matters the most is what you're doing. Anticipate slipups to occur, and when you fall down, dust yourself up and get back on track. Keep reminding yourself that you have all the reasons to achieve your health and fitness goals.

Calorie Counting

While there are varying perceptions about calorie counting and weight loss, most experts do believe that counting the numbers can indeed help you achieve your weight loss goals (Frey, 2020). In theory, this seems simple, but most people make mistakes, as they are bombarded with plenty of information to digest regarding this matter.

Basically, calories are a measure of energy content in the foods and beverages you consume. The calories you consume every day are essential for body functions like thinking, breathing, walking, eating, and even talking. Excess calories consumed are usually stored as fat. Consequently, the more the number of calories you consume, the more likely you will put on weight over time.

Scientific studies have proven the fact that calorie counting does help to manage weight. By limiting the calories you consume, you can better manage your weight both in the short and in the long run.

How many calories should you consume to meet your daily requirements? A number of factors will come into play here, including age, gender, activity level, and weight. For instance, a 30-year-old male athlete will have a higher caloric intake compared to a 65-year-old woman. When trying to cut weight, one should focus more on creating a calorie deficit. This can be achieved by consuming less calories than the body expels.

Tips to Succeed in Calorie Counting

The calorie counting process can appear tiresome since you need to keep track of what enters into your mouth every now and then. However, there are several pointers that can help you streamline the whole process.

Take Advantage of Tech Tools

You shouldn't rely on your memory to remember all the foods you consumed during the day. Sometimes you might recall, but it's impossible to know this with accuracy. Guessing and approximating the numbers will prevent you from knowing whether you're making ideal diet changes or not.

There are tons of calorie-tracking apps that can simplify the process. Record the number of calories in your foods every time you sit down to eat. If this doesn't work for you, a small notebook you can carry around will do. The idea is to find it convenient to track the calories.

Measure Portions Accurately

Tracking your portion sizes is equally important. Underestimating your portion sizes will often lead to overeating. Add yourself small portions of food to prevent overeating. You can also try using small plates that will give you the impression that your portion size is enough. Admittedly, we all know how big plates lure us to add more food, and we're always tempted to clear everything.

Be Thorough

It's also essential that you don't overlook other foods you don't consider important. For instance, you shouldn't forget to record nibbles or snacks. At the end of the day, they add up to the total number of calories you consume. Develop a habit of writing everything down. This is the most important rule that will make your calorie counting process a success.

Chapter 11: Reaching Your Workout Goals



Millions of people around the globe set goals to get fit. Often, this is a common yearly resolution that people make as they look to transform their lives. Interestingly, the majority of these folks will not win any major events or become Olympic athletes, become bodybuilders, secure lucrative endorsements, or receive any other form of recognition that might come to mind. However, most of them will start their days feeling grateful to be alive, finding inner purpose, training to meet their personal goals, and enjoying their fitness journey. Additionally, they would want to learn more about living better lives at every step of the way. Along the way, they will find happiness in seeing themselves progress.

Perhaps this is the kind of feeling that you would like to evoke while you're on your fitness journey. The good thing is that you now have an idea of what you need to do to achieve your health and fitness goals. There is a lot to benefit from exercising more often. It's not just about losing weight and

getting fit. Your life will change in many ways. Think of how productive you will be since you will have the energy you need to attend to your daily routines. Your health and well-being will also improve. Similarly, expect to be in a good mood every time you achieve your mini goals.

However, you don't have to wait until you've accomplished your fitness goals for you to be proud of yourself. It's important to visualize achieving your set goals. Take a minute or two to picture yourself living your dream—having that rocking body or losing the weight you've gained over time. Reflect on a time in the near future when you will gaze at your old pictures and be happy about the big strides you've made so far. The trick here is to manifest the good feelings tied to getting fit now.

Why wait while you can enjoy how good it feels as you walk down this path? This is what it means to have fun with the fitness process. Most people find themselves giving up on their fitness goals because they overwhelm themselves with goals solely based on results. Instead, you should focus more on the process goals. Commit yourself to work out more frequently—that's all it takes. Do what you can do to make sure that you get your heart pumping and in the process burn more calories. It's what you do toward your health and fitness goals that matters the most.

Seek to have fun working out. This might mean finding ideal partners that will push you not to give up. By having fun with the fitness process, you're more likely to stick to it in the long run. Avoid engaging in fitness programs that are incompatible with your personality. Do something that makes you see the beauty of working out. For instance, try cycling with your friends in the evening. You can use this time to catch up and share your fitness goals. Go for a swim or challenge yourself to an outdoor exercise with a group of friends. There are many physical activities to try that will make things exciting.

While you're working hard to lift weights, you should also remember to train your mind. Develop an ideal mindset that looks to build muscle and fitness. The biggest challenge people face with exercise is having a positive mindset to push

themselves for an extra rep or set. What they fail to realize is that muscles grow when they are challenged. It might take some time before you start noticing the results you've been working for. During this period, it's easy to lose sight of your health goals because it's annoying when you're working hard and nothing is paying off. With the right mindset, however, you can stay motivated and ready for long-term success.

The best way of training your mind is by equipping yourself with knowledge and skills you need to reach your goals—just like what you're doing right now. Knowledge is power. Knowing what you need to do and how to achieve your goals will simplify the whole fitness process for you. For instance, by reading this guide, you're aware of the common challenges most people face while working out. Therefore, it's easy for you to circumvent these obstacles and maintain your focus.

Besides, knowledge gives you a reason to believe that it's possible. You might have gone through several slipups before, but the inspiration you garner from this guide is enough to help you bounce back and work on getting in shape. Make this manual your best friend and revisit it every time you feel stuck. Sometimes we all need a little nudge in the right direction. Don't give up.

Again, don't wait any longer to start exercising. If you're thinking of changing everything overnight, this will only overwhelm you. Instead, focus on what you can do now. Start making small lifestyle changes that you can stick to in the long run. Eat right and limit the number of calories you consume—that's a great place to start as you eat your next meal. Tomorrow, focus on showing up at the gym. Always remember that showing up is half the battle.

The grueling war that you have to win is the battle with your mind. Your mind will play tricks on you that you can't achieve your fitness goals. After all, you've failed more than once. Well, giving up only means that you give up on yourself. Silence your inner critic and go to the gym even when you don't feel like it. Switch things up in your workout routine and keep your body and mind guessing. Ultimately, you will win the battle over your mind and take charge of your life. Henry

Ford once asserted that “Whether you think you can, or you think you can’t—you’re right” (Goodreads, n.d.-b).

Your health and overall well-being depends on the decisions you make from this moment moving forward. Decide to be happy. It’s high time to start living deliberately. The past is long gone, and the best thing you can do is to work relentlessly to achieve your fitness goals. You only need to take the first step, and the next step, and eventually build consistency. As human beings, we are creatures of habit. Therefore, you do not need to worry about building consistency if you keep doing what you love. Make your fitness process fun, and your body and mind will naturally adjust.

Chapter 12: Final Thoughts; You Can Do

It



Congratulations! You now have all the information you need to start your fitness journey. Getting fit is an interesting journey that will change your life forever. You will enjoy life more, and you will want to see yourself making progress every day, not just in terms of physical fitness but also in other areas of your life. As you read through this guide, one take-home message to bear in mind is that losing weight, or getting fit for that matter, won't guarantee you true happiness. Try to avoid the notion that you will be happy when you finally get in shape. It never works that way.

Most individuals assume that achieving their health and fitness goals will make them happy. With this mentality, you will easily set yourself up for failure. It might get to a point where your goal is too big, and you realize that you won't be as happy as you thought. On the contrary, you might also reach your goal, but if it doesn't bring you the fulfillment you expected, you might also perceive yourself as a failure. You're not a failure: You were born to live a great life, and that should be your primary goal.

True happiness comes from the inside. It comes from a combination of different things in our lives, including optimal health and fitness. While most people will start from the outside to change how they feel inside, always strive to work on the inside. Working hard to achieve your health goals will help bring about a balance in many areas of your life. For instance, you will be more productive, you will be happier, and you will want to make smart food choices that help you live a healthier life. The more you make more informed choices with your health and well-being, the more things will align themselves in your life. Consequently, happiness is a by-product of all the good things you do with your life.

Aim to be positive about your life. A positive mentality will drive you to do what is necessary to shape your life in the right direction. With this mindset, you won't consider exercise as something challenging or strenuous. Instead, you will develop a habit of working out more often because you understand the benefits associated with exercising. The point here is that you will focus less on the end result and enjoy the fitness journey.

One of the main reasons why people give up on their fitness goals is because they complicate the whole process. Losing weight and getting fit only demands that you focus more on what you need to do to live a healthy life. This might mean something different to other people. Setting unrealistic goals to lose 10 or 20 pounds in a month often leads to frustrations. Why don't you simplify your workout routine and commit yourself to doing something that works for you?

Set a goal to eat the right foods before you even think of hitting the gym. It can be as simple as adding more fruits and

veggies to your diet. Adjust this after some time, and commit to walking for about five miles a day. A few weeks down the line, sign up for a gym and start lifting weights; work with a trainer; or perform more strength training exercises. Now, if you continue doing this for the rest of the year, you can be sure to notice the benefits of exercising. There's nothing complicated about the process, right?

The key to staying motivated in any fitness regimen is to understand the short-term benefits of working out. Besides helping you to relieve stress, you will feel healthier and this will have a positive impact on your moods. The fact that you enjoy what you do and notice the positive changes it has on your life will help you be more likely to stick to it.

Staying committed to the fitness routine you develop also creates a sense of mastery. Even after a few weeks or months, you will be proud of your accomplishments. It doesn't matter the type of physical activities you incorporate to your workout program—what matters the most is that your body is on the move and you're burning more calories. Your level of confidence will be given a huge boost now that you will be getting more things done in less time. With time, you should expect to be more enthusiastic with life. Overcoming the everyday fitness challenges will have ripple effects in your life. With your high self-confidence, there is nothing that would seem unattainable in your eyes. Therefore, you will often set goals and work hard toward achieving them.

Prepare yourself for a major battle with your mind. Your inner critic is your worst enemy. The mind is designed to protect you, and it will stop you from doing something that doesn't make you happy or any activity that seems to strain you. Since you've made up your mind that you will work out, aim to silence your inner critic with the help of positive affirmations. Focus more on the good things about your body and pay little attention to what you don't like. You don't want to give your mind solid reasons to talk you out of working out. A positive mindset will also guarantee that you stick to the plan even when you don't feel like exercising.

More importantly, quit focusing on your physique and outcome. Build consistency and self-discipline toward working out. The results will show up sooner or later. Develop a training routine that makes you happy with what you do. It's all about creating balance in life. You don't want to feel as if you're throwing everything away just to exercise in the gym or at home. Remember, you can do it—you only need to put your mind to it and eliminate distractions in your path. Never give up on yourself.

Good luck!

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