

JAMES ATKINSON

FITNESS & EXERCISE MOTIVATION

WEIGHT LOSS
BOOK 1

JAMES ATKINSON

HOME WORKOUT FOR BEGINNERS

WEIGHT LOSS
BOOK 2

JAMES ATKINSON

HOME WORKOUT FOR CIRCUIT TRAINING

WEIGHT LOSS
BOOK 3

HOW TO START **WEIGHT LOSS**

FITNESS BOOKS

A BEGINNERS **FITNESS GUIDE** TO STARTING
WEIGHT LOSS & EXERCISE THE RIGHT WAY



JAMES ATKINSON

HOW TO
START WEIGHT LOSS
FITNESS
BOOKS BUNDLE

A BEGINNERS FITNESS GUIDE TO STARTING
WEIGHT LOSS & EXERCISE THE RIGHT WAY.
NO GOING BACK THIS TIME!

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JAMES ATKINSON

FITNESS
&
EXERCISE
Motivation

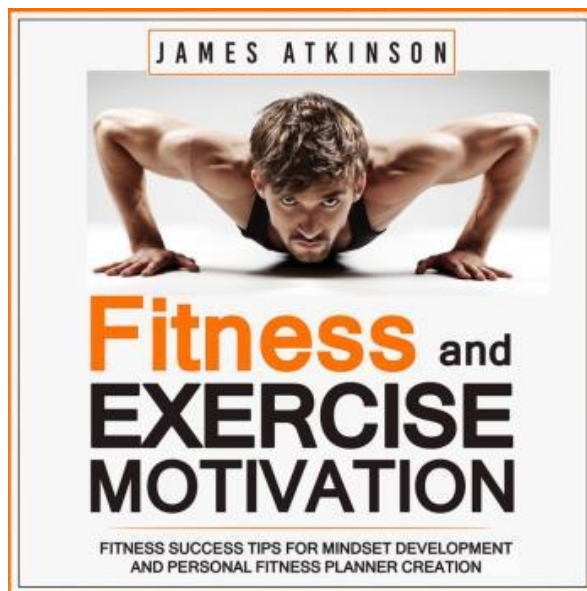


**FITNESS SUCCESS TIPS FOR MIND-SET DEVELOPMENT
AND BESPOKE FITNESS PLANNER CREATION**

BOOK #1 - FITNESS AND EXERCISE
MOTIVATION

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PREFACE

It's a cold dark day in October, the rain is lashing down with no signs of stopping, the wind is howling and the hope of a peaceful warm summer's morning seems like worlds away.

From a warm cosy flat whilst sipping on a hot coffee, he stares out of the window at the torrential downpour and the stoic leafless trees that are being brutally assaulted by the relentless wind. He weighs up his options, he could sit back down, get another coffee on, maybe even make something nice to eat. It is Sunday morning after all.

Or he could do what he had planned to do, get out there and make the journey to the gym on his bike to complete his last training session of the week. After some hesitation, he recognises that he has come too far to take the easy option and give it a miss. With a reluctance bought on by the thought of what he is about to endure, he puts on his training clothes, fills a bottle of water and heads down the stairs to his waiting transport.

The bike leans up against the shoe rack. It is an old and well used thing that was given to him by a good friend a year or two ago. There are plenty of scuff marks on the frame and a fair few rust spots but it has never let him down. At least this vital piece of kit would not be a target for thieves. With this in mind, he is aware of a smile on his face, he quickly puts on his waterproof coat, throws on his back pack, and opens the front door.

He wheels the bike out into the pouring rain and while holding the seat to steady the bike with one hand, he closes the door with his free hand.

"I'll see you soon" he mumbles to himself as he pulls the elastic draw strings of his hood a bit tighter around his neck. A few minutes later he is on his way to complete his training session. There is no turning back now, the hard part is over!

To some people, this little story may seem extreme and most would not need to ride a bike to the gym in the pouring rain to get their workout done, but the messages in this anecdote are at the heart of any fitness success story. If you can be the trainer or dieter that is serious enough about their goal to get out there and act with no excuses, you will be rewarded.

The easier it is for you to overcome stepping out of a comfortable environment into the pouring rain, choosing brown rice instead of white pasta or even starting your home workout routine, the easier it will be to reach, surpass and maintain your fitness goals.

In this book, I will show you how.

Hi, I'm Jim, and yes, I am the guy who bikes to the gym in the rain and I have achieved a fair amount when it comes to developing my own fitness. But I would not say that I have a special gift or a secret that I use to give me an advantage over anyone else that would like to do the same.

Since my early teens I have been involved in some form of fitness training which has taken me from long distance running, bodybuilding competition and I also served a number of years in the British army in an airborne unit (9 para sqn R.E).

As most people know, long distance running and bodybuilding competition are polar opposites when it comes to training routines and body condition and I am not genetically built for either. So why is it that I can go further than most when it comes to reaching fitness potential? I believe that anyone can achieve great things in the fitness and fat loss game, there are no magic bullets, ultimate training routines or secrete formulas to fitness and fat loss success.

The key is to become responsible enough to get yourself to the point that you are more than self-motivated enough to make the decision to step out into the cold and rain and make it happen!

In this book I will share my personal experience with some lessons learned that have been invaluable to me along with some practical advice when it comes to overcoming the mental challenge that is at the crux of any fitness success story.

This advice is based on my personal experience of over twenty years in the health and fitness arena.

If you would like more useful fitness tips and advice, or you just want to stop by and say hi, here is my website:

JimsHealthAndMuscle.com

I'd like to thank you for your purchase and I know that you will get some great fitness results if you take on-board and act on the information that you read.

This book will give you many of the tools that you need to hit your fitness potential. This statement stands for all of my fitness books.

Before you start a new fitness routine, please check out my author page as there may be other titles that you can benefit from:

[James Atkinson \(author page\)](#)

Il let you get stuck into the book now but I would just like to let you know that if you have any questions or comments, I would be more than happy to help you as these subjects are a passion of mine and have been for many years.

Big thanks to all of my family and friends that have been a huge influence on me. This has helped me to become the positive person that I am today.

Also a special thanks to Tammy for supporting me through everything.

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GRAB YOUR BONUS

I strongly believe that anyone can get the fitness results that they want. It just takes a bit of consistency and work.

To help you along with the diet aspect of your journey, I have created a PDF for you.

The PDF holds some of my very own recipes. Everyone who knows me knows that I love my food! But living a healthy lifestyle means that some of the best foods are out of bounds...

Or are they?

I have messed around in the kitchen and created some great recipes (and some abominations, but fortunately for you, I will not share these) that are low in fat, low in sugar and high in quality nutritional value.

As a 'thank you' for your interest in my book, I would like to offer you these 7 healthy recipes that will really help to boost your results!

Simply click this link or copy the following URL into your web browser and let me know where to send them!

<https://jimshealthandmuscle.com/healthy-recipes-sign-up/>

Happy cooking!

INTRODUCTION

When it comes to any type of fitness goal, whether the goal is fat loss for aesthetics and general health benefits or a more competitive goal such as sports conditioning, there is always a shared quality: Motivation.

Whatever your fitness goals happen to be, you will not get very far without the motivation that is required to realise your ambition. Sure! At the beginning of a fitness venture, everyone is motivated, but not everyone can sustain this motivation to see their fitness plans through to the end.

This book is all about starting from the very beginning of a fitness objective from the first thought. If you struggle to stick to a training routine, diet plan or have problems getting motivated when it comes to your health and fitness in any way, you should find this book useful.

There are a number of ways that you can keep yourself motivated and there is a certain mind-set that you will need to adopt.

WHY TAKE MY ADVICE?

Why should you take my advice? I have already given you a brief overview of my past experience, but if I were reading a book about health and fitness in order to glean solid advice, I would want to know how qualified the author was with as much details as possible. So for your information:

I am a qualified fitness coach (Trained through WABBA Qualifications in the UK). I am in my early thirties and have been at the sharp ends of several niches on the fitness spectrum.

During my time in the fitness game, I have been skinny and weak, fat, unfit and out of shape, a long distance runner, passed para training and served a number of years in 9 parachute squadron Royal engineers in the British army and most recently been a competing bodybuilder.

Since December 2013 I have been writing fitness articles, books, training programmes and helped people around the world achieve their fitness goals. The power of the internet and the liberating evolution of self-publishing has enabled me to do this.

My thinking is that; it is all well and good deciding that you want to develop your fitness in one way or another; maybe you want to lose a whole lot of weight, or maybe you want to become a better runner or maybe you even want to become a competing bodybuilder.

Once someone has decided that they want to change or work towards a fitness goal, the logical step for most is to find a fitness programme to follow and as you are probably aware, there are no shortage of these to choose from. In fact, this can be fairly confusing and a wrong decision can be an easy mistake to make.

Anyone that has read any of my other fitness books will know that I believe in getting real results from a training plan. This

is why I put a huge focus on fitness for the long term and sustainable long term fitness results. I also believe that choosing a training plan is not the first step to take on your new fitness journey.

The first few steps that you should take are to create the foundations for the building of your fitness potential. If these foundations are as solid as they can be, your fitness goal, whether it be weight loss, muscle building or just general good health and wellbeing will be realised without the constant “yoyo training cycle” ie: Start a training plan or join a gym, give up a few weeks in, then rinse and repeat every six weeks or so until all hope is gone. The only thing this is good for is destroying motivation and an individual’s self-belief.

Changing your body in any way is hard work! Most people will believe that the physical challenge of their project is the greatest test, but the mental challenges are by far and away the hardest part to overcome. In fact, I would go as far as saying that the overall mental challenges will equate to about 90% of the entire endeavour.

In essence, it is the mental challenges and lack of psychological preparation that are often the deciding factor in fitness success. Without the right mind-set, there is no chance that anyone can reach their potential.

This book is all about preparing for fitness success by first of all understanding the importance and the power of self-motivation and secondly by utilising a few practices that will help you create that solid foundation that you are to build your personal fitness success story from.

Before we jump in, I feel that it is worth enforcing the statement and mentioning again that getting results from any fitness routine or diet is hard work! So why make it even harder by not being prepared?

Get prepared! Plan and get yourself motivated! Use this as your starting point and don’t skimp on this stage, take it seriously and your future-self will be extremely grateful that

your past-self did such a good job at the beginning by laying those solid foundations.

HEALTH CHECK

Before you embark on any fitness programme please consult your Doctor.

Do not exercise if you are unwell.

Stop if you feel pain and if the pain does not subside then see your Doctor.

Do not exercise if you have taken alcohol or had a large meal in the last few hours.

If you are taking medication please check with your Doctor to make sure it is ok for you to exercise.

If you are in any doubt at all please check with your Doctor first. It may be helpful to ask for a blood pressure, cholesterol and weight check. You can then have these read again in a few months after exercise to see the benefit.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MOTIVATION, SELF-MOTIVATION

Everyone has seen great before and after shots of fitness success stories. Although many of these are “Photoshop at its best”, there are also many that are true, real life endeavours. These images are often used to endorse a dietary supplement, a certain way of training or a diet idea.

The one thing that is hardly ever mentioned is the hard work, self-motivation and persistence that this individual has been able to sustain to achieve their results. It’s all well and good getting hold of the best dietary supplements, diet plans, training facilities and the best workout routines that are available, but these things are nothing without the motivation to get out there, stick to your plan and see it through.

This is why I believe that you should take plenty of time to motivate yourself as an individual. The things that motivate you, will not be the same as anyone else, this is personal, so you have to identify what is important enough to make you want to keep going until you get to where you want to be.

I believe that self-motivation is one of the most powerful skills that someone can learn. If you can motivate yourself enough to hit a good fitness goal, you can motivate yourself to do anything!

I learned to self-motivate subliminally. I left school at sixteen with below average grades after an academic struggle of nine years. I was pretty much written off when it came to chances of success “in the real world”. I had low self-esteem and didn’t feel that I would amount to much.

Although I would not get a career of any noteworthy standing, I was offered a job that paid good money for a sixteen year old with a contractor for British sugar. This was hard manual work

but I really was very grateful to Phil, the guy who gave me the job and by doing so, he had given me a chance.

Although I appreciated the fact that I had been given a job and was a valued employee, I really felt that there was more to life. It was a big world out there and I wanted to see it. The last thing that I wanted to do was spend my life in a nine to five job and stay in the cocoon of the town that I grew up in. So, with this in mind, it felt obvious for someone like me to look into joining the army.

After a lot of physical tests, aptitude testing, a bout of glandular fever and nearly two years later, I joined the army. During my time in the British army, I went on to pass P company (selection for airborne soldiers) and serve with 9 para squadron Royal Engineers.

After a four year stint with 9 squadron, I then became a fitness instructor and personal trainer.

If you fast forward a few more years, I am now making a living as a self-published fitness author. This may seem hard to believe when you look at the sixteen year old, academic failure Jim with his low self-esteem and limited future. But it actually happened and the lessons that I learned about self-motivation on my journey so far are the vital ingredients that made me believe that it was possible for anyone to achieve anything that they want to achieve.

“JIM’S FITNESS MOTIVATION CONCEPT”

One of the major observations in my time in the fitness industry is that there is a stage where motivation and drive to continue with the fitness endeavour is at a low point. More often than not, this stage is the breaking of most would be fitness success stories.

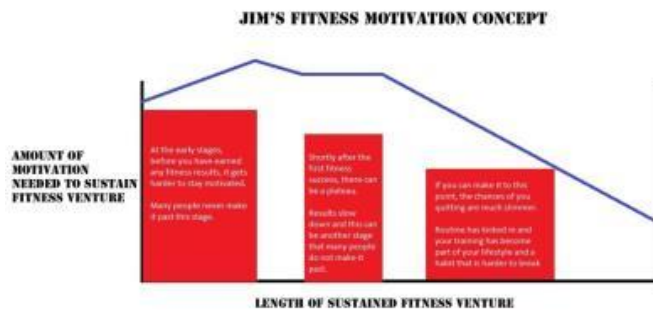
I have said to many of my past clients, readers, and training partners that the hardest part of a training routine or diet plan is the early stage, the stage where you make all of the changes, sacrifices and put in a whole lot of work and it seems like it is for nothing.

As a long term fitness enthusiast, I understand this. I know that the work will pay off but it is still a challenge for me to stay motivated. For the past ten years I have been in the weight lifting and bodybuilding game and in this time, if there were a few months where I needed to slow down slightly, I would never completely stop because I know how hard it is to start again. Instead, I would opt for a routine where I would maintain and just keep everything ticking over nicely rather than losing it all and starting from square one. To me, starting from square one is not something that I would like to do unless it was a last resort.

I am a veteran of fitness and have conditioned my body to the extreme, and if I decided to train for a specific goal, I would know that the work that I was doing would eventually pay off. But if it is this hard for someone like me, how hard is it for someone who is unfit, overweight with no real knowledge of training who is venturing into fitness for the first time?

It must be one of the toughest challenges that that person will attempt to overcome, and I imagine that to get through it they will need rock solid blind faith or a very strong understanding on how to create the mental robustness needed for this undertaking.

Being a visual guy myself, I find that having a graphical aid to help me understand a concept really goes a long way to help me comprehend an idea. So without further ado, behold “Jim’s fitness motivation concept”:



This is a very typical picture of the lifecycle of a beginner to fitness. There are three stages here:

THE FIRST STAGE:

Every single January, gyms and fitness establishments are getting ready to welcome new members who want to start the New Year with a fresh healthy lifestyle. Dave, Rob and Sarah all decide that this is the year that they will finally get in shape and earn the lean, toned body that they deserve.

Highly motivated, they all take advantage of the January offers and get the first month of their membership free and the joining fee waived at their respective gyms.

Great stuff! They all hit the gym on January 1st and get their new fat burning routine sorted out by their new fitness instructors. The first session goes really well. And they are all looking forward to their lean future selves.

Rob and Sarah manage to stick to the new plan for the first three weeks, but Dave misses a few sessions because he decides to go straight home after work instead of hitting the gym on some of his training days. He is supposed to visit the gym three times per week on his way home from work.

Soon, it is the end of February and spring approaches! It has been almost six weeks since Dave, Rob and Sarah started their new fitness journey, Rob and Sarah are now seeing their first real set of fitness results. They are both stronger, have more energy and can now actually see that their bodies have started to change. It has not been easy. They both doubted themselves at times and struggled through but now it's starting to pay off. The results that Rob and Sarah have earned give them a huge surge of motivation and it becomes easier not to miss a training session.

It has been two full weeks since Dave last visited the gym. Dave continued his pattern of missing the odd training session here and there until he lost motivation altogether and gave up. There will be a summer gym promotion soon Dave, or failing that there is a January 1st every year.

THE SECOND STAGE

Although Rob and Sara are still training and have seen their first real set of fitness results, they are both struggling again. The initial weight loss and fitness results that they are earning are now starting to slow down and the training sessions are sometimes becoming harder to get motivated for.

Sarah is happy with her results and starts to sit back on her Loral's a bit, she decides to drop one of her training sessions every week and just train harder in the two that she still completes.

Rob on the other hand decides to chat to a fitness instructor about mixing his training routine up a bit to spark a bit of new enthusiasm and see if he can get a further boost of fat loss.

THE THIRD STAGE

It is now mid-summer and Dave has re-joined the gym and is ready for another attempt. He took advantage of a summer offer that waived the joining fee. Dave is familiar with the exercise routine that he was doing back in January, this fits in well with his lifestyle and he knows all of the exercise movements so he jumps right back into it and starts at the beginning again. The cycle starts again for Dave. Will he get past the first hurdle this time?

Sarah is getting ready for a summer holiday in Spain. She last visited the gym in April. The two training sessions per week soon turned into one and then dwindled to zero. Sarah managed to convince herself that her gym membership was not giving her value for money any longer, so it was cancelled.

Rob however still visits the gym, he now even works out more frequently. He has a good relationship with his trainer and has upped his game several times since he started back in January. Rob has lost a lot of body fat and he has also developed a good foundation of muscle which is starting to give his physique a more athletic look.

As Rob has worked hard to achieve his goals and stuck with it through the initially unstable and doubtful times, he has seen some real results that prove that his hard work will pay off. From now on, it will become more and more unlikely that Rob will decide that he is going to stop training. Fitness and gym visits are now part of his everyday routine and therefore part of his lifestyle.

This is an example of the three most typical types of trainers that start a fitness venture. In my experience as a personal trainer, I can say that seven out of ten new recruits to fitness follow a similar path to Dave, two out of ten follow in Sarah's footsteps and only one in ten make it as far as Rob.

During my time spent as a passionate personal trainer, I found this frustrating and very disheartening. I wanted all of my clients to smash their fitness goals, surpass their highest

expectations and be the inspiration of multitudes of others, but the longer that I was in the personal training game, the more it became apparent that it is really up to the individual to truly want to succeed.

You could have the best personal trainer in the world; you could spend hundreds of pounds or dollars a week and still not get the fitness results that you want if you are not able to self-motivate.

I had several clients that would pay me £25 per hour for training sessions. They would do this for months, staying inconsistent with the training routine that I set out for them and not taking the time that they were not in the gym seriously ie, bad diet and lifestyle. Each of these guys would be giving me hundreds of pounds of their hard earned money and getting nothing visible in return. This made me uncomfortable and this moral dilemma of mine is the main reason that I don't do personal training sessions any longer.

I am now the author of several workout books, these range from £2.99 to £9.99. Now these books are fairly inexpensive and are based on the training concepts that I have used to get personal fitness results and results from my clients that were willing to put in the effort. I have also had plenty of readers contact me to let me know that they are progressing and hitting their fitness goals.

So, it confirms my theory that someone who is willing to do a bit of reading , learn to self-motivate whilst only spending £2.99 has a significantly better chance at hitting their fitness targets than someone that throws hundreds or even thousands at an expensive personal trainer hoping that this is the answer.

IT STARTS WITH A REASON

Whenever anyone decides to take on a fitness venture, new diet, or healthy lifestyle change there is always a trigger. If there wasn't a reason to do this, why would it even cross your mind?

Most people who decide that they want to start a physical training routine or healthy diet will want to do this because of the way they feel. It might be that they feel overweight and unattractive and when they look at themselves, they don't like what they see. On the other hand, it might be that they are training for a sporting event and changes have to be made.

If you are looking to start a new fitness regime, whether you have done nothing physical for thirty years or you have decided that you want to change the condition of your body in any way after a lifetime of training using limited methods, there is always a reason.

Most people including myself in the past, overlook this extremely powerful tool by having a "subliminal reason" ie they don't know exactly what their reason is and this can really weaken the success chance of the fitness endeavour.

When I look back on my own personal experience, now I know how to identify my reasons for doing things, I can explain my reasoning for the big choices that I made now. But at some points in my life, I know could not.

I was in my late twenties when I first started utilising this tool and it was someone else that set me on this way of thinking. I had been into bodybuilding in a big way since I left the army several years earlier and I had wanted to compete in a bodybuilding show for the last few years.

I was speaking to a work colleague when we were on a break one day whilst showing him some pictures of some of the guys that trained at my gym that had already competed in bodybuilding shows. My work colleague was not someone that

had the slightest interest in fitness or physical training so I should have probably been chatting to him about something that we had a mutual interest in. But when someone has a passion for their goals or hobbies, they tend to want to share it with everyone and I had gone down this rabbit hole.

As he flicked through the picture gallery on my phone, you could follow his thought process by looking at his face. The subjects of these photographs were all men wearing nothing but a set of extra small posing trunks, they were smeared in deep dark fake tans with hard lean muscular physiques and to top it off, they were all striking some kind of “show off” pose.

As he handed my phone back to me, with a grimace on his face he said

“Why do you want to look like that?”

In my infinite wisdom I answered in my typical light-hearted style with,

“Chicks dig muscles don’t they?”

Although my answer didn’t do a lot for the reputation of the bodybuilding community, it was no doubt the kind of answer that my colleague had come to expect of me as I am a bit of a joker anyway. It was obvious that he wasn’t that impressed with my plans and I felt like the time spent on the subject had come to an end so we steered the conversation in another direction.

On my way home from work that night when I had plenty of thinking time in my car, I thought about his question again.

“Why do you want to look like that?”

Now I was alone with my thoughts, I could be perfectly honest with myself without being scrutinized by anyone but yours truly. So, what were the real reasons?

As I made the forty five minute car journey home, I set about questioning myself and searching to find the real reasons that I wanted to do a bodybuilding show. Most people don’t want to

do this kind of thing so there must be something that had caused me to want to take up the challenge?

After being brutally honest with myself and facing the potentially humiliating truth, I came up with the real reasons. I was able to identify that wanting to compete in a bodybuilding show was a progression from overcoming an inferiority complex that I had when I was in my younger more influential years and a need for the physical and mental challenge.

But If I had said that to my work colleague earlier he would have probably been left speechless as it would have been way out of character for me to confess such a thing. And in all fairness, earlier that day, I didn't know myself that that was the answer either.

When I was younger, I was always a small kid. I really wanted to be the Johna Lomu or Scott Gibbs on the rugby pitch and destroy my opponents with my awesome power, speed and bulk. When I watched these guys play rugby on the television for their respective countries I would get goose bumps as they knocked other players down, broke out of multiple tackle attempts and carried the ball across the try line to lead their team to victory. But I would only ever be able to imagine what it felt like to be them. I was too small and weak to be anything but a liability on the rugby pitch so I had to settle for being a substitute player. Until I found that I could work on my strength and size using a weight lifting routine!

Many years later, after overcoming many more challenges and learning some valuable lessons along the way that in turn shaped my personality and turned me into a different person altogether, I would jump at any opportunity to prove that I could overcome tough physical and mental challenges.

I hit bodybuilding hard and after a few years I actually looked like a bodybuilder, but to really reach my potential I would have to strip as much fat away as possible and the only real way to do this is with some solid accountability. What better way to put yourself under pressure to achieve a goal than to have a timescale and strong reason to accomplish that goal. If I

were to commit to a bodybuilding competition, when the day of the competition came, I would be stood on a stage in nothing but a tight thong in front of several hundred people. Now if you were going to be doing that you would really want to look your best!

On that drive home I found out a lot about myself and it was my true thoughts on a simple throw away question that my work college had put to me.

At that point I had committed to the bodybuilding competition, although this was months away, and I could pull out at any time, I wasn't going to, I would see it through and stand on the stage looking the best that I possibly could.

That now seemed to be the reason that would carry me to the finish line but there were other powerful reasons that were working their magic too.

- I was in a job that was not suited to me and really needed a challenge outside of work
- I wanted to push myself to see how far I could go
- I didn't want to be an average joe who lifted weights and had a bit of size
- I didn't want to be the guy that said "I thought about doing a bodybuilding show once". I wanted to be the guy that said "I did a bodybuilding show once, here's my trophy"
- I wanted to add the bodybuilding competition to my "Have done" list
- I had been out of the army for several years and needed the challenge of hardship that goes with competition prep so I could taste the sweetest of sweet after the long months of sour when the competition was over. (This is an awesome feeling)
- I wanted an epic facebook profile picture ☐

So as you can see, finding a powerful reason or number of reasons to take you to your own personal victories is not just a simple thought. To get the best out of this tool, you must delve deep into your soul and really try to hit the nail on the head.

And the more honest that you can be with yourself the more of an accurate truth you will find.

Remember that it is only you that knows your real reasons for wanting to change your fitness levels, so it pays to be as critical as you can be with yourself. This is how the most powerful reasons come to light.

If the reason isn't strong enough to drive the individual forward and force that person to their feet when the challenges of their goal brings them to their knees, then the reason isn't good enough! Everyone's reasons will be different and what one person might find ridiculous or even comical, this reason could be enough to push another person past the limits of even their own comprehension.



“I did a bodybuilding show once, here’s my trophy”

MENTAL CHALLENGES

When it comes to fitness training and making healthy lifestyle changes, most people will look at the physical aspect of the new undertaking as being the most challenging part that they will have to overcome.

But as mentioned earlier, this is a fair way from the truth. I can tell you that the mental challenges of any exercise routine or diet are by far and away the hardest part to overcome.

When it comes to dieting and training, I truly believe that the mental challenges when compared to that of the physical have a 90% share leaving the physical challenges with a mere 10%.

In winter 2001 I was in the military. I had passed my basic army training and also finished my combat engineer training. During our basic training we had all been asked if we were interested in taking the tests to serve with 9 parachute squadron royal engineers or 59 independent commando Royal engineers.

At the early stage of our training, many of the guys put their names forward as there was a stigma attached to anyone who wore a maroon or green beret. These guys were (and still are) viewed as the hardest soldiers in the royal engineers who always get the opportunity to get in to the action first. These guys were viewed as highly professional machines that could be phased by nothing. Of course, when you are a new recruit, you are very optimistic and pretty naive and your outlook is "How hard can it be?" so probably about 60% of my intake put their names forward to be considered for the ranks of these "special forces" type guys

By the middle of the second phase of our training, we were all asked the same question and this would be the point that anyone wanting to try out for 9 para squadron or 59 commandoes would have to officially sign up for it. At this point, everyone that had lasted the basic training and second

phrase training so far had a pretty good idea of how hard it might actually be to pass these courses. Only three of us signed up for 9 squadron.

When the day finally came, we had passed out as trained combat engineers and wore our blue berets with pride (later in my army career I would learn to call this a “crap hat”), all the recruits that passed were sent to different postings, some went north, some south and some to Germany. The three of us that had volunteered for 9 squadron got posted right into the wolf pack in Aldershot to start the pre para selection process also known as “The beat up course”.

For a new recruit and a “crap hat” 9 squadron is a pretty hostile place to be. Previously we had only seen the odd one or two maroon berets walking around and these guys gave off plenty of attitude, but now all there was were maroon berets. Most of the guys didn’t even acknowledge us, some quizzed us on who we were and what we were doing here in an all but friendly manner.

The beauty of this selection process is that the applicant can quit at any time, and admit that this type of soldering is not for him. Until an airborne soldier passes the rigors of “P Company”, completes his parachute jumps training and accepts his parachute wings, he is not obliged to stay.

On every training session during the beat up course, the squad of potential future airborne soldiers is followed by a Land rover. This is known as “The jack wagon”. If an applicant is injured, passes out or just decides that he’s had enough, he can jump on board, sit down and chill out. But if he gets on the Jack wagon willingly, it will be the end of his time with the airborne forces.

This fact makes it a lot easier for the applicants to throw in the towel. And coupled with the outrageously tough physical aspect of the course, it is under this psychological pressure that an applicant is tested on their mental robustness.

Early every morning of “the beat up course” about fifteen of us would form up in three ranks outside the barracks block

ready for the first training session of the day. It would be the three of us from my basic training intake (we were the newest to the military that were on the course) and the rest of the other applicants ranged from having served one or two years in the army and having ranks of lance corporal to even more experienced veterans of eight plus years and sporting ranks of Sargent.

The first training session of the day was always a straight up run or a weighted march/ run with boots and weapon. We would set off from the barracks and head towards the training area. These sessions would not be less than one hour thirty minutes. Anyone who has been to the training area in Aldershot will know that when I say “training area” I don’t mean a simple running track. There were countless hills in this zone and a lot of these had names, “spiders”, “sisters” and “flagstaff” to name a few. The ground was uneven and it had several different environments. There was loose rocky terrain, lots of potholed and puddled areas and there was even a big stretch of sand that lived up to its name of “Long valley”.

Every day, the training staff would try to break us mentally and physically and because the option of quitting was always there, it was not uncommon to be running with another applicant in the morning and come the afternoon, that guy was gone back to his unit never to be seen again.

On one such occasion we had set off as usual on our run. It was a particularly hard run that saw us starting at and maintaining a fast pace. It took us through hill sprint reps, firemen’s carry hill reps, and it took us through our fair share of water and mud.

Everyone struggled through this training session but there were a few that struggled especially. One guy in particular spent most of his time at the back of the squad and needed constant encouragement thought the session. He was last on all of the hill reps and carries, he regularly fell back and had to play catch up, but he stuck with it.

Even though this guy struggled physically through the training session more than most, was offered the comfort of the “Jack wagon” by the training staff repeatedly, he kept going. It is this quality of mental robustness that the para training staff are looking for.

As this training session was several weeks into the beat up course, we knew the area and knew when the session was finally coming to an end. We had all been pushed to our limits and were ready to get back to the showers and refuel for the next beating. When we were about 0.5 miles from the barracks the guy who had struggled so much now seemed to be finding his stride and had fallen in with the rest of us. Maybe the pace had slowed down slightly or maybe the thought of finally finishing was spurring him on?

As the barracks front gates came in to view, I must admit that the site of steel mesh and barbed wire had not looked so inviting before. That was our finish line! It was only twenty feet away and the feeling of accomplishment was common through the squad. Everyone was running tight and together as one triumphant unit including the guy who had struggled so much. Ten feet, five feet now, but the staff kept on running past the gate!

The session was not over. No more than ten feet past the gate, not only did the guy who had struggled so much earlier stop dead in his tracks, but other guys started to drop back too. The whole mood of the squad plummeted from high and triumphant to low and unhopeful.

The pace of the run did not change but moral received a devastating blow turning the physical challenge into a mental and physiological battle that each man had to fight on his own. This was made even harder as one of the staff dropped back to the side of the now scattered squad and announced,

“Never assume that it’s over and you’ll get on a lot better on this course”

This did affect me mentally, but I was able to overcome, and quickly accept that it wasn’t over and managed not to

outwardly show it. I stuck with the training staff as I had done through the training session and carried on.

We did not go back onto the training area, we merely ran to the next gate of the camp and finished at this one. It was about two hundred meters away. In that time we had lost two of the squad to the jack waggon

To me this is a crying shame because it was a mental failure and not a physical one. So the guys that quit and changed their futures at this point were the victims of mental defeat rather than the expected physical failure.

These guys effectively shaped their futures by making a conscious decision to give up. It was the thought of the unknown that stopped them. If the staff had told them that we would just be going to the next gate, they would no doubt have flown through, even if they were asked to sprint to the gate, I believe they would not have had much of a problem in doing so.

For the sake of two hundred meters of the unknown, these guys would never earn a maroon beret. This was the first time that I realised that developing mental robustness can be the make or break of well laid out plans, especially with a fitness routine or diet plan.

I am aware that this is an extreme account of a mental challenge but it is not as far away from the types of challenges a beginner to fitness may encounter as you might think. I learned many lessons from this one training session but it is only recently that I have looked at it in more detail and broken it down that I can actually liken this single training experience to that of a long term fitness or fat loss journey.

From my own personal experience I know the feeling of starting from the beginning of a fitness project and as I have mentioned in previous chapters of this book, I believe that this is the hardest part. The longer that you stick with it, the easier that it gets, but you have to be aware that it's not just a physical challenge, sometimes the mental challenges can prompt a devastating effect on your plans.

Another big take away is that when you think that it's hopeless, you should always keep going because you are probably a lot closer to achieving your goals than you think.

CHANGE

“If you always do what you have always done, you will always be what you are right now”

Although routine and good habits are vital for any healthy lifestyle, sustainable diet or workout plan, a bad routine or can be hard to break. But if you are looking for serious results from a fitness venture, you must be willing to embrace change.

Most people are averse to change. This is normally because humans, like most other animals are uncomfortable with the unknown.

It is easy to live in your own safe little bubble. If you have a nice structured life where you go to work every day, you know what time that you will be at home, you know that you will be able to pay your bills at the end of the month and you can pretty much predict what the foreseeable future will bring, you will be comfortable and the longer that you carry on along this path, the more comfortable you will become and the harder it will be to initiate a change of your own choosing.

For many people this is the shape of things. Yes there are possibilities of pay rises, yearly increases with some good employers but at the end of the day, the longer that you stay in a position; the harder it becomes to make the choice to change your trajectory. I am not saying that this is always a bad thing, it can be very rewarding for some people. I believe that this example of a comfort zone is the most universal.

When someone who has not been involved in any form of fitness before makes the decision to start a workout routine, diet or healthy lifestyle endeavour of any kind, they will have to make some drastic changes if they want to succeed and get the best results from their effort as they possibly can, and the longer that they have not be in the game for, the harder and more uncomfortable these changes are likely to be.

If you are the one who has been out of the fitness game for a long time or this is the first time that you have decided to play, don't let the above statement put you off.

If you are aware that it is normal for the change aspect of this whole thing to be so tough, you will be better equipped to take on the challenges.

Eventually, if you stick to your new plan, the changes that you have made will become a part of your everyday routine and the metaphoric cement that is used to strengthen the habits of your new lifestyle will become stronger and stronger.

When I was dieting for my bodybuilding contest, I had to make many drastic changes as every bodybuilder should when they are preparing for a competition. I will admit that this is an extreme example and most people will not need to take it this far but it is a great illustration to back up the point of this section of the book.

On the day before and leading up to the start of my pre competition diet I was eating fairly healthily, not really looking at the quality of food that I was putting in to my body and I was eating a lot. I would basically eat high protein foods regularly and it was great to add some chilli source, a bit of mayonnaise or some cheese in here and there. I would make a lasagne once per week for me and my girlfriend too. I would also eat the odd chocolate bar or cookie if the chance arose and it was always cheat night on Saturdays. Cheat night was and still is my favourite night of the week. My girlfriend and I order takeaway food and watch a movie. Cheat night also lives up to its name as this is our chance to eat chocolate, cakes and any other naughtiness.

So, one day I would look forward to every meal, find it easy to sit down and get stuck into the food that I had prepared and the next day I would be clock watching and dreading the next time that I had to eat. And if I were to stand on the stage come the day of the show and be a formidable contestant, I would need to stick to this lifestyle for the next twenty weeks without a single exception.

Every day from now until the contest, I would have to eat:

Breakfast: 100g rolled oats, 6 egg whites, 1 scoop whey protein

Meal at 10:30: 200g chicken breast 100g brown rice broccoli

Lunch: 200g chicken breast 100g brown rice broccoli

Post workout: Protein shake

Evening meal: 200g chicken breast 100g brown rice broccoli

Before bed: 100g brown rice, 6 egg whites, 1 scoop whey protein

As I had planned to compete in a bodybuilding contest for some time and had done plenty of research whilst training in a serious gym that was geared towards bodybuilding competition, I knew what to expect. But this was all theory until I was actually living it.

At the end of the first day, I was totally exhausted as I also had to up my training. I had to be out of the door at 5:30 every morning to do my cardio and be back with enough time to get my meals prepared, eat and shower before going to work. After my working day I would have to go to the gym and do my hard resistance training before doing another thirty minute cardio workout.

Between cooking, eating, working and training, there was little time for anything else and at the end of the first day I had doubts that anyone in the world could keep this up for twenty weeks.

This was not just a single change to contend with, it was a complete lifestyle change in one fell swoop. Nevertheless, I stuck with it and managed to get a good routine going. I started to become efficient at cooking, eating and washing up and with a slick system in place I could get this all done as efficiently and as painlessly as possible.

I even managed to negotiate a different break pattern at work with my boss. We were supposed to get a forty five minute break for lunch and this did not work for me so I put forward a request to change this to three fifteen minute breaks throughout the day so I could stay on track with my eating.

My boss agreed to this but if she hadn't I probably would have just walked out of the job. Although I made some good friends there, I hated that employment and my dream of bodybuilding was more important to me. It was actually a good thing that she agreed and I didn't leave as a few weeks later I was counting my penny collection in order to fund my new diet! But that's another story.

The changes that had to be made in order for me to achieve my goal were pretty punishing, but eventually I had adapted to create new systems and solid routines and it started to become the normal and easier to sustain.

Through the twenty weeks, I thought a whole lot about eating Chinese takeaway, pizza and I actually had many dreams about cheese burgers and chocolate bars. Even the thought of a nice chilli and fluffy white rice with some crusty bread and butter made me wish that this dieting insanity was all over.

The day of the competition came, I got ready, and my best friend drove me and my girlfriend to the contest venue. We drove in convoy with the two other guys that had also endured the previous twenty weeks dieting to compete and a whole bunch of supports from our gym. It was a great day made better as we all returned with trophies.

From that evening, my heavy restrictions on food had been completely lifted and I had free rein to eat whatever I wanted. The night of the show was pretty much written off as I was exhausted, severely dehydrated and not in any state to enjoy a good meal. I did what I could and drank plenty of water, but ended up going to sleep at about 10:30pm. A few hours later and I had come to my senses, I woke up at around 3:30am with ideas of the potential food possibilities that lay at my mercy. I headed to the kitchen and it began! I just started eating! Doritos, doughnuts, chocolate, cheese, peanut butter, I could even get a cappuccino on the go. This food was in the house because people had bought me it in the form of celebration gifts, and my sister had even made me a full hamper of “none bodybuilding food”.

I did not go back to bed, I just kept eating. It was a Sunday and my dad had planned to do a barbeque for the family. There was all sorts here, all my favourites and among this were the homemade cheese burgers that I had been dreaming of. This food had never tasted so good!

Although it was good to have a day where I could go at any kind of food with no regard for its nutritional content, I did not realise how dependent I had become on the diet and lifestyle that I had been living for the last twenty weeks. I had worked so hard to earn the body that I now had, that I didn't want to ruin it and go back to what I used to be. When you put in this amount of work with any project, you would not want to just throw it away and start again.

The first real struggle that I had was on my first day at work. I didn't have to do my cardio in the morning, cook egg whites, chicken, brown rice and broccoli. Sure it was nice to get up an hour later, but it actually took me longer to make a few tuna salad sandwiches on rye bread, than it did to do my usual cooking, washing up and eating. Also in the first week back at work, I decided that I would go into the town and pick up some “normal lunch” like all of my other co-workers did on

their forty five minute lunch break. We were situated right on the doorstep of a busy town with plenty of choice when it came to food. But I really struggled to find somewhere that I wanted to get my lunch from. I didn't want to eat bread or flour based carbohydrates, I didn't really want to eat potatoes or other starchy products and I found myself totally lost when it came to lunch times at work. "A duck out of water" was never a better metaphor for my situation when it came to this change.

The extreme changes that I had made twenty weeks earlier that I had thought would be impossible for anyone to sustain had now become hard for me to move away from. Even now, three years after my bodybuilding contest, I still maintain some of the changes that I had to make in order to compete. There were many valuable lessons learned during this process for me and the power that sustained change can have on someone's lifestyle, not only in the health and fitness world but in every other aspect of their life can be staggering.

When you make changes that you know are for the best, have the conviction to keep it up and it will get easier to maintain and eventually become second nature.

THE POWER OF SUSTAINED CHANGE

There is much to be said about the power and value of a sustained change when it comes to your fitness, diet and lifestyle choices.

If you start making constant small changes that affect your health, even if it is only one small change per week, you will be investing in your lifestyle in a positive way, much the same as you would if you invested your money in a compound interest scheme. (I'm not sure if such a thing exists these days but the principals are there).

Albert Einstein said:

“Compound interest is the greatest mathematical discovery of all time”

I am pretty sure that most people know the story of the two sons who get a choice of inheritance from their father on his death bed. But for those who don't, here is a quick version of it:

The choice is between one million pounds right away or a compound interest scheme starting at a penny and doubling every day for a month. With this second option, the son would also have to work his father's farm from dawn until dusk for no pay for thirty one days; he would only be paid the compound interest with his first day of work paying only one penny.

So the first son decides that he will take the one million pounds without much thought, he was not going to do a day's hard work for a single penny! He takes the one million pounds and gets to work on setting up his own new business.

The second son knows the value of compound interest so he agrees to take the second option and gets to work on his father's farm.

By day five, the second son is exhausted; he has accumulated a grand total of £0.16p. Nearly a week's hard work and not even one pound to show for it. The first son who took the one million pounds has started to invest in his new business, he has treated himself to a few new personal things and has about £800,000 left to play with.

On day twenty the second son has spent a lot more on his new business, he has taken on some of his own staff to oversee the setup. He has now spent £600,000 leaving him with £400,000. This is still a good position provided that he has done everything right with his new business venture. While the first son has invested in a new business and has £400,00 in the bank at day twenty, the second son is still working hard on the farm and he only has £5,224.88p to show for it. He only has eleven days left, less than half of his time to make his final figure of inheritance.

It is not until the twenty eighth day that £671,088.64 doubles from the previous day to £1,342,177.28p that the second son's choice of inheritance option given to both sons by their father not only comes close to one million pounds but it shoots past it. But there is still a few days' work left for the second son. He works hard for these last three days and on the thirty-first day he finishes work on the farm for good and takes home £10,737,418.24p. This is nearly eleven times more than his brother took for his inheritance when he chose the first option that their father had given them.

If the second son had decided to take a few days off here and there during his months' work on the farm and forfeited that day's pay, he would have drastically affected his final sum of money. Just by skipping four days throughout his thirty one day working month, he would not even break one million pounds. The same applies to earning fitness results. You can see this working in the earlier chapter "*JIM'S FITNESS MOTIVATION CONCEPT*" in a fitness sense on poor Dave.

I love this story. I first heard it when I was at primary school. The fact that I even remember it from such an early age must mean that I was on-board but, I really only noticed the true

value when I saw the film “The happening” by Stephen King. In this film, the actor John Leguizamo quickly goes over it to try and stay focused or for some other reason while they are in a car..... Before it smashes into a tree and they all die.... But that part is not important.

When I saw this scene in the film, I immediately recalled the story from my primary school days and as I was much older, had a lot more life experience and so appreciated the meaning on another level. As I had spent a lot of time working hard for personal goals, many of which had been fitness related, I realised that the moral of this story fits perfectly into any fitness ambition as well as any other ambitions in life and it is never truer when it comes to the act of sustained small changes in relation to your lifestyle.

It is also worth considering that small incremental changes that are sustained and compounded over time can equally work in a negative way too.

GOOD AND BAD HABITS

Habits come in several forms; some can be good and some bad. Every individual has an amount of both. Good habits and bad habits are one of the key culprits in everyone's state of health and fitness.

As mentioned in the closing paragraph of the last chapter;

“small incremental changes that are sustained and compounded over time can equally work in a negative way too.”

This is where bad habits are to blame. Although it is true that many small changes that you make and develop into good habits will result in positive exponential fitness progression, it is also true that many small changes that result in developing bad habits will result in negative exponential health and fitness decline.

We all have habits and routines; these can be good or bad. But until you stop, think and identify what these are and what causes you to keep these habits going you will find it a lot harder to stop them. You may not even know that you have a bad habit until you identify it.

Let's take smoking for instance. Now this is clearly a bad habit and if you smoke, you know that you have a bad habit and it is not doing your health any favours. The thing with this kind of bad habit is that it will fit into your routine somewhere.

For example, every morning on your way to work, you light up a cigarette without even thinking about it, on your coffee break or lunch time and on the way back from work, you light up and puff away, it's just what you do.

Now this is all part of your routine, smoking all of those cigarettes adds up over time and the longer you do it, the deeper the roots and the more established the habit gets, and like an old oak tree, it will become very hard to remove.

If you are reading this and happen to be a smoker that struggles to quit and are thinking:

“What does a long term fitness freak know about how hard it is to quit smoking?”

Well I have actually been a smoker and know all too well how this becomes part of a routine and in turn a negative habit. Yes it is hard to stop smoking, but in my opinion, it is as hard as making any other lifestyle change. If you work to break the bad habit and the routine that comes with it whilst working on your mental robustness, you will overcome it.

Smoking is an obvious example of a bad habit as it is clear that inhaling hot black smoke with a ton of toxins in to your lungs to pollute them with tar whilst also poison your blood stream is not going to do you any favours at all. But there are many bad habits out there that are a hugely overlooked. Some can be very insidious and can be causing big disruptions to your health and fitness plans.

These days it seems that there are fewer smokers; in fact it seems that it is actually a dying habit. But there are still some bad habits out there that can be addressed and stamped out to further escalate the fitness progression of a would be fitness achiever.

Most people who are looking to get into fitness for the first time, or even people that have been training for several years will be out to lower their body fat percentage whilst also developing muscle tone throughout their body or in specific areas that are particularly weak for that individual.

This is all well and good but it always prompts a sad sinking feeling in me when I see people working so hard to achieve their fitness goals but they are overlooking or are simply unaware of some vital aspects that are holding them back. There are many examples of bad diet habits but here is one that most people should be able to relate to:

Most if not all of the popular brands of fizzy drinks are completely useless and counterproductive to fitness, and

specifically fat loss. These types of fizzy sugary drinks are packed with useless calories and rubbish, even most popular energy drinks that are associated with “pre workout energy” are counterproductive.

Personally, I have known people to drink several litres of these fizzy drinks every day. This has been a choice that they have made and subsequently it has formed a bad “drinking habit”. The person in question was and probably still is very overweight and before I was as versed as I am now in the fitness and fat loss game, I believed that his genetics could play a big part in this and have a lot to answer to. I didn’t know this guy very well; he was a work colleague that was based in a different office of one of my previous places of work so I only saw him when he visited. As well as being hugely overweight, he was tall with it and I used to envy his bodybuilding potential. I always thought;

“If I had a body with that structure, I would be able to turn it into something awe inspiring. I would no doubt be on the Mr Olympia and Arnold classic bodybuilding stage receiving cheques for \$500,000 every time”

Although this guy didn’t have the slightest interest in diet and fitness I always wondered how he managed to get so overweight and so big, it must be diet right? But how could you manage to eat so many calories every day to keep this size on?

One day at work, there was a freak occasion where I was permitted to leave my office and go and help out in another department. As I entered the office space and walked among the work stations and cubicles of this new office I happened to glance at one workstation in particular where I noticed a familiar face. It was my work colleague that owned the body that I could have done so much with if it was gifted to me instead. Right away I noticed three, two litre bottles of fizzy drink sitting there. One of which was empty and another was half full. Immediately, things started to make sense. It was obvious that this is a habit of my work colleague.

This snap shot of someone who clearly had a fizzy sugary drink problem provoked an instant curiosity within me and that night (after my training session of course) when I was at home, I grabbed a calculator and googled how many calories a typical can of fizzy drink contains. Knowing that these calories don't offer any valuable nutrition to the body I would find out how many useless calories were being consumed every time someone drank a full can.

I agree that this is not normal behaviour but it would answer a question that I could not answer for a while, so I had to do it.

It was pretty frightening! Typically, each can of fizzy drink contains 140 calories. Let's imagine that someone falls into the habit of drinking a single can every day with their lunch. At the end of the week, they will have effortlessly consumed 980 calories, just shy of 1000 calories. If you do this for a month, you will have managed to up your monthly calorie intake by nearly 4000 calories. After a year it would be 51100 calories! These calories do not come from useful nutrition like protein, vitamins, minerals and complex carbohydrates either, we are talking 51100 calories from refined sugar which is not useful for anything but weight gain and a development of poor health.

I will point out again that this is a single can of fizzy drink per day. On working this out I was shocked and had to do the maths several times before I was happy with it.

A single can of fizzy drink even as a treat or reward every day doesn't seem like a bad thing but when you look at it through the eyes of a "useless calorie inspector" like myself it shines a whole new light on it. If this is an everyday habit of yours and you are looking to lose body fat through new fitness and lifestyle choices and you drop it, or even cut it in half, you will instantly be better off.

There are many bad habits like this one working against many unaware, future fitness success stories and some that will eventually and also regrettably deny their host of this success.

If you don't want to fall victim to the insidious nature of some unidentified bad habits, you need to learn to first identify them.

It is always good to remember at this point that:

“Your current state of health and fitness is a product of YOUR choices, actions and habits that YOU have developed”

Bad habit triggers and substitutes

There are parts of your daily routine that trigger your bad habits such as coffee/ lunch breaks or car journeys. As you identify these you will have a clearer picture of what you can do instead.

Let's say that every time you got into your car, you lit up a cigarette. You need to find a practical alternative to this.

By practical I mean something you can do in the car instead. It's no good saying that you want to swap the cigarettes for tap dancing, probably not the best thing to do whilst driving your car to work.

I would invest in a “travel mug” you know the ones with the screw top lid that you can put into your cup holder in your car. I would make coffee or green tea in this before getting into my car and have that instead and once you get used to this if you want to quit coffee, you could swap this for chewing gum.

If you identify your bad habits and start to find healthier alternatives, your bad habits will become good habits.

Just imagine turning 10 bad habits that affect your health in a negative way into 10 good habits that affect your health in a positive way! Remember that this will not happen overnight and it is something that needs to start small. These small changes compounded over time will literally change your life.

There are many things you can do to break your habits. If you can just quit cold turkey that's great. Do it! But there is the

danger that this may be too harsh and you could crack under the pressure.

My argument is that if you are going to make a change that you want to be sustainable, you should do it with the view that it is a long term goal and a project that you can work on.

Be in it for the long term and you will see a lifetime of benefits.

SABOTAGE/ BEWARE THE “NAY SMITH”

Everybody knows negative people, you may work with one, had an experience with one in the past or you may even be one yourself. If you are aware of the effect someone else's negativity can have on you and your fitness/ lifestyle goals, you will be able to identify the threat and guard against it.

There are two main types of negativity that can stop your fitness progression dead in its tracks or work on breaking it over time. Both of these are a real threat to your achievements.

The first is negativity from people who you don't care for, don't like or don't even know.

During my basic army training, I struggled with the fitness. I was by no means the weakest in the troop of new recruits but I was definitely not the strongest. Cardio training and running had always been one of the weakest aspects of my fitness and I would dread the cross-country running sessions when they reared their ugly head. At this point in my training if I was told that a year from now I would be a machine when it came to this sort of thing there is no way I or the corporal that was responsible for me would have believed it.

It was this corporal that first planted the seeds of doubt in my mind about my ambition to become an airborne soldier. Not long after the point in our training where we had just realised how hard p-company and para training might be and all but three had decided to take their names off the list, we were on a training exercise out in the woods somewhere in the south of England. This was probably only a few days exercise, a week at most and it would have been child's play compared to what I would become used to later on in my army career. But at the time, it seemed tough for all of us.

During these exercises in basic army training, there are unique opportunities to spend more time with the training staff. Whether it is by design or accident is unclear but as you are

out in the “wilderness” and working together, I suppose it makes sense that you will cross each other’s paths a bit more.

The troop was split up into four eight man sections with a section commander (who was the training staff) as the man responsible for his section. The section commander was the guy who made the decisions, dished out the jobs along with any punishments. One night my section had an “admin period”. This is a short break in duties so you have chance to sort your kit out, clean your weapon, sort your feet out and eat. We all sat in the woods in a circle on top of our bergens (large back pack) and went about our admin. Unusually, our section commander had joined us. Voices were kept low as per standard operational procedures, we were in full darkness save for the odd glow of a burning hexamine block that was set into a small metal fold away stove, as some of the guys let their army rations heat up whilst changing their socks.

There was a general chit chat going on and the mood was fairly good. We broached such subjects as; the employment that we used to be in before we joined the army, our old lives and our first names (this got a lot of smiles as we never used first names and it was surprising to realise that we didn’t even know the first names of some of the guys that we had spent nearly every waking minute with in the last eighteen weeks or so). Soon the conversation got onto P-company and parachute training. Our section commander had spent twelve years in the army so far and although he had never attempted the course himself, he knew plenty about it and he knew a few of the guys that were currently serving there. He explained how hard the course was and he talked about the “beat up course” before P-company itself and when I got the opportunity I asked him a question:

“Corporal, do you think that I will pass?”

He looked at me and with not even the slightest hesitation he said

“No”

He shook his head and continued:

“From what I’ve seen so far you don’t really have a chance. Where is your shadow posting Atkinson?”

As we were over half way through our second phase of basic training, we had been given our first posting destinations. This is where we would effectively start our army career and it would be our home for the foreseeable future. As I had signed up to attempt P-company, I was assigned to Aldershot in the south of England to start the “beat up course” with 9 Squadron. But as there is no guarantee that a recruit and volunteer will even last five minutes on this course, he is given a “shadow posting”. This meant that if I failed, got injured or decided to retract my application for airborne forces training, I would have somewhere to go. My shadow posting was in Germany.

“It’s Germany corporal” I said, feeling a more than a little bit de motivated.

He smiled slightly and nodded and he approvingly replied with “Ah, you’ll like it there Atkinson. There’s loads of drinking and German towns can be a lot of fun.”

From this I understood that my section commander, a guy who was fitter than me, had a better understanding of army life and in my eyes was a successful soldier knew with 100% clarity that I was not going to pass P-company. I had never really liked the guy either, but I know this was by design. A recruit was not supposed to like his instructors.

With this kind of confirmation from my section commander I started to think about retracting my application to attempt P-company. I would go to Germany and see how that panned out. After all, I could work on my fitness and reapply at any point in my career.

Although I “knew” now that I would not pass P-company, I didn’t retract my application right away, I still had a few weeks to act on this and to be honest, the thought of backing out made me feel hollow.

If I had listened to my section commander and not even attempted P-company, I would be severely lacking in the self-

development that came from this course and the few years that I spent with 9 squadron as a result of passing it.

I believe that by not retracting my application and by not accepting my section commander's condemnation that I changed the course of my life for the better. I also believe that this decision was a major player not only in my future fitness but the foundation of mental robustness and the understanding of how to overcome any goal that you put your mind to.

Unfortunately, this type of sabotage has a lot to answer to. There is no doubt that it is responsible for countless fitness venture abandonments and this is something that really annoys me.

Another classic example of this type of sabotage is the type of saboteur that will laugh at or make fun of a new comer to fitness. People who are overweight and are carrying a lot of body fat are sometimes targets for this ridicule. It comes from people who have no business in voicing their opinions, they are thoughtless and don't understand the damage that they might cause. This type of incident can be extremely counterproductive. Especially to an individual who is in the early stages of their first fitness endeavour.

If you have been in this situation, experience this in the future or if the fear of this kind of thing is holding you back and actually stopping you from taking the first step towards a fitness goal, you should bear this in mind; If you let this affect your ambition in any way, you are giving in to them and effectively letting them rob you of your achievements. Don't let anyone with this kind of inconsiderate nature take away your goal.

Being told that you can't or shouldn't achieve something by somebody you don't like or being an unwilling target for criticism by a random stranger is one thing that can cause self-doubt or in the worst case a total breakdown of the fitness goal at hand and is an obvious means of sabotage, but being advised in a friendly manner by someone that is close to you

that you rely on is how sabotage gets in with its metaphoric cloak and dagger.

Have you ever really wanted to attempt something challenging or had a goal but decided that you could not attempt it because you aren't built for it, you are not intelligent enough for it or you believe that you are simply never going to be the type of person who could achieve the goal? I have and I would be surprised if there is a single person out there that can say they haven't.

Your decision may have not actually been yours. It may have been another influence that stopped you in the most innocent of ways. This is something that I only became aware of recently but I now realise that it is one of the most unnoticed saboteurs working away to hold you back and stop you from achieving.

Every day, you are influenced by your family and friends in one way or another. These guys have your back. They have your best intentions at heart, but sometimes they can actually hold you back. The clearest example of this that relates to the shared experience of myself and anyone who has ever had a standard school education is that at school you are taught that you should study hard, get good grades and then you will get a good job working for a stable employer. This is what I and certainly anyone else in my age group was conditioned into thinking.

Since I left school, I wanted to be a millionaire and have complete financial freedom and I wanted to achieve this by doing something that I loved. The problem was that I was never an academic and was already being stereotyped by my educational body as mediocre at best.

Subliminally, I always knew that I could not achieve this by simply working for someone else, but I was always told that I needed to find a job to get the money coming in. And this is what I did. Every job that I have done bar the army has been

on a low pay grade and would never have given me the freedom that I had wanted.

It was the lessons that I learned through my fitness achievements that finally made me believe that I could achieve what I wanted in other aspects of my life. If I could go from someone that could not run a mile and a half in fifteen minutes to someone who could run a marathon any day of the week and pass P-company, or if I could go from a skinny long distance runner to a competing bodybuilder, why couldn't I achieve financial freedom? Surely, I managed to do all this through hard work, why couldn't I change my life in other ways?

It took me until I was thirty years old to realise this and even then I was told by some of my close family members that I should "try it" but not to give up my day job. This doesn't work for me. I know that if you want to achieve a fitness goal, you have to be fully committed to get the best results. So to me, this venture was no different.

One day in late 2012 I went to visit my father with a bit of news that he would find displeasing to say the least. He knew that I wanted to quit my current employment working a nine-to-five job that I hated but he had advised me to stick with it and work on building my other business part time until I started to earn enough money to live on. Then I should quit.

On first thought this appears to be sound advice and I took it on board. But it was only when I reflected on every fitness achievement that I had accomplished that I realised that this would not work for me. If I was to do it as per my father's advice, I would not be 100% committed and would not be prioritising my dreams. So I handed my notice in at work and started working on what I really wanted to do.

On this particular Sunday morning I sat down with my dad and said;

"Dad, what would you say if I had handed my notice in at work?"

I didn't really want to tell him as I had an idea as to how he would react. I even toyed with the idea of not telling him at all.

His reaction was close to what I was expecting. His happy mood drained and he answered with;

“I would be absolutely furious”

Hearing this and seeing that I had disappointed my father was hard to just ignore. No one of sound mind with a supporting caring family wants to be a disappointment to their close family members or indeed let them down in anyway. But as I was expecting the reaction, I was able to talk it through and help him come to terms with it.

If I had taken my father's advice, I would have really struggled to even start. Compared to most, I am a slow learner and there was a lot to self-teach. It was more than apparent to me that my current employment would have the potential to damage my chances of success or even eventually beat me into submission.

Although my father had my best interest at heart and he didn't want to see me struggling, give up a “secure job” or put all of my efforts into something that he may have seen as a bit of a pipe dream. He didn't realise that his advice could have cost me my chance at a better future.

In the month of December 2015 I almost trebled the income that I would have earned if I had stayed in my previous job and not go against my father's advice. It would have taken me three months to earn what I earned in a single month and I had taken the ceiling off my earning potential to boot.

This is a good example of the type of sabotage that is innocent and to all intents and purposes is not meant to be malicious at all. In fact it is meant to be the direct opposite. When it comes to fitness goals, if you find yourself in a position where this is happening, to yourself or someone in the circles that you move in, you should address it.

It may be that you are very overweight, never done a single exercise session in your life but you would like to have a go at running a marathon. Everyone who knows you will know that you are not a fitness enthusiast and they probably won't be themselves so they will maybe joke with you about the fact that you are not built for running or maybe tell you that you should start with a smaller more realistic fitness goal.

Although it's a good idea to start small and work up, you can still have the ultimate goal of running a marathon on your ambition list but you should not be influenced or convinced to "downscale" your ambitions based on someone else's opinion.

The most valuable take away from this chapter is to be aware of sabotage and work towards learning how to identify anything that has the potential to damage your progress. Whether this is a blatantly malicious verbal attack, something said in jest by a friend with no ill intention or a value that you have been raised on, some of these saboteurs can be absolutely devastating to your progress and ultimately your fitness dreams.

If you find yourself in this situation, you do not need to react with an explosive torrent of hate filled anger at your saboteur; you just need to be aware of what's happening. The last thing that you want to do is fall out with a close friend over such a thing, you could just explain this concept to them or point them towards this chapter. This may even cause them to become more encouraging to you and in the end become an essential asset in your fitness success.

When all is said and done, who has the right to persuade another to put a ceiling on their potential, take away ambition and ultimately stop them from achieving, fitness deeds or otherwise? No one.

TRAIN SMART

In the chapter “Good and Bad Habits” we looked at how your routine and your habits fit together like a nice jigsaw. They work together without you even noticing. Whether you like it or not, your routine will influence your habits and vice versa.

I truly believe that routine is a huge factor in your success with health, fitness and your whole lifestyle. If you have a solid daily routine that promotes a healthy lifestyle and you have good habits to match, you should have no problem in getting the results that you are after.

Having a good exercise routine is just a single piece of this puzzle but without it, the puzzle will be far from complete.

If you have everything in place, and you have consistency with your training, diet and lifestyle, you will no doubt start to see the benefits. This is great! Make no mistake; this is where you want to be.

But there is another factor that can put the icing on the cake for you and make your efforts count for more. Having a good workout routine that you can work from can make all the difference.

I believe that there are several components that make up a good workout routine. These components will make the routine sustainable and help yield the best results. They are:

- Progression
- Time scale
- Planning

PROGRESSION

I am not going to knock the countless celebrity fitness DVD's that always seem to flood the market, especially right after the Christmas period because they do have a place for people wanting to start a fitness venture and these types of one off training routines can be the start of great things for the right type of person. But in the vast majority of cases, these one off routines are short lived and are missing a few components for long term success.

Progression is vital for fitness results. When anyone first starts a fitness routine, it will be at a certain intensity, it will take a set amount of time, use several exercise movements, have a set amount of resistance and so on. Normally, this will be great for the first week or two if the exercise routine is consistently completed. But with the absence of exercise progression results can start to diminish and when this happens, there is a knock on effect and motivation inevitably takes a hit. When we lose motivation with exercise, we all know what can happen.

Therefore it is important when deciding to take on a fitness challenge that you pick an exercise routine with some form of progression. You should look at the bigger picture and find something that is progressive in nature. Your new exercise routine should have at least three stages of advancement so if you find an exercise plan that has a "Beginner", "Intermediate" and "advanced" option, this is a good start. It means that you have something to aspire to and you have scope for improvement.

TIMESCALE

A timescale should not be underestimated. Let's imagine that you have gone down the road of following an exercise DVD bought out by your favourite celebrity. You follow the onscreen instruction for the forty-five minutes or hour that it plays for and after you feel like you have done a good workout. Great stuff. You feel good!

But, where are the mile stones set out for you to aim for? Where is the progression, how long will it take for you to get bored and where will it end?

This is why having a timescale is so important for long term success. You should have a timeframe in mind from the start. I would advise that you plan to use a workout routine that does not have any progression for no more than four weeks. This applies to aerobic routines that do not have any form of variable ie, no increase in resistance, intensity or workout length.

Another important thing about a timescale is that you can create an "End game". Buy this I mean you have a certain time scale to achieve a certain goal. The best example of an end game in my experience was my bodybuilding competition. The bottom line was that I had twenty weeks to achieve a physique that would not embarrass me on a stage in front of several hundred people and I actually had a specific date that I had to achieve this by.

Getting ready for a bodybuilding contest is one thing but a timescale doesn't have to be that long and the endeavour doesn't have to be that extreme. A timescale of two weeks is better than nothing. If you set out to lose eight pounds in body fat in two weeks from today's date, you have a timescale and a goal. This is the kind of thing that should be employed by anyone that is serious about getting results from their fitness training.

Another good tip in using a timescale is to have a specific date in the future that you want to achieve your goal by. If you

don't have a date, you can create one. Let's imagine that it's the beginning of April and you normally have a beach holiday in August. You could book your holiday now and you will have four months to train to look good on the beach. With this "end game" set, you can now work on smaller "sub timescales". You could now work on a small goal every week, like the loss of around four pounds of body fat and have a weigh in on a specific day and time every week.

PLANNING

Without sufficient time spent on the planning portion of achieving a fitness goal, you will struggle! Every success story can attribute the accomplishment to a plan of some form or another and the more in-depth and robust the plan happens to be, the better the results.

Everything in this book is leading up to the creation of your own bespoke plan that will almost guarantee your success. It is no accident that section two takes up a big chunk of the percentage of this book; it is dedicated to the planning aspect of fitness and lifestyle change. I cannot stress enough how important the whole planning process is if you want to get real results that you can be proud of.

Section 2 will walk you through the creation of your very own blueprint that will become your solid foundation and go to reference guide that you will be able to call upon, tweak, tick off and ensure your progress throughout your endeavour.

If you have not got a plan, it's like stating a journey without knowing your destination.

EXCUSES, EXCUSES

Everybody, myself included can find a good excuse for not doing a training session or for not making good dietary choices. But there really are no excuses.

Way up in the top ranks of excuses, if not the #1 excuse is the lack of time for performing an exercise session/ routine or for making a decent healthy meal. But as mentioned before, there really are no excuses.

I am aware that this may make me sound like a bit of a die hard, old school army drill instructor with no empathy for anyone who doesn't give 110% but that could not be further from the truth. My experience has proven to me that there truly are no excuses. I have managed to stick to a diet and training routine through some hard times and I would class myself as an average guy. I personally know someone who lost both legs and one of his arms in an explosion and he managed to cycle from Paris to London. Feats such as this should really put things into perspective.

Let's say that the average person gets up at around six thirty am, gets ready for work, goes to the day job and is back home for around six pm. It would be reasonable to say that this person goes to bed at around ten pm.

Supposing that this is all true, it leaves four hours in the evening. Four hours is a long time and realistically, a ten o'clock bed time is fairly early, but let's stick to these timings. It is fair to say that an hour of the left over four hours could be taken up with cooking and eating, another hour could be spent doing household chores and another hour could be spent watching the television or playing computer games. This still leaves an hour. Maybe a workout could fit in here?

When looking at this example, it is more than fair to say that I have been conservative with the time that it takes to do things. Realistically, you are not going to get home from a full day at work and spend a full hour on household chores every day and

if you were, I would imagine that you would be an organised person that is more than capable of multi-tasking so cooking at the same time would be no problem and to boot it would be a time saver.

The point here is not to say that everyone has a spare four hours at the end of each day, because in truth everyone has a different set of circumstances. Some people might have children, some might work a shift pattern, some might have a disability. The point is that it is you who needs to understand that if you want results from your efforts, you need to make the time. If it means that you have to get up an hour earlier or go to bed an hour later, or even utilising your lunch break at work, then you should do it. But in truth most people can find the time without making any significant sacrifices.

99% of excuses are self-inflicted, and if you can accept this, you will be in a better position to counter any such excuse. You may have looked at someone else that is in better physical condition than yourself and accredited their ability to achieve this condition to their circumstance:

- They don't work the same hours as me
- They don't have children
- They are younger than me
- They live near a gym
- They have more money to spend on better food than me
- They know more about fitness than me

The list goes on. But as mentioned before, everyone has a different set of circumstances

I am not ashamed to say that in the past, I have looked at others that had a better physique than me and had thoughts along these lines. But now I am not embarrassed to admit it because I understand that it is probably natural to have this mind-set. I also understand the old saying: "The grass is always greener on the other side" and this tells me that they have their own challenges and if I were on their side, these challenges might cause me to look back at where I was and

find similar excuses as to why I would have it better if I were back where I started.

So if you see someone who is having the fitness success that you would like, it's probably not because they have it better than you, it's probably because they have worked hard to overcome their individual challenges and earn their results.

Maybe you know someone right now that you feel this way about or maybe you will find yourself in this situation at a later date. If and when you get to this point, it would be good to remember the old "grass is always greener" saying and be encouraging towards the person that is doing a bit better than you are. You may even learn from them by asking them about their routine. There could be things that they do that you haven't even thought of that would give you a boost or make things a bit easier on your side.

Everyone has heard that there are "no excuses" and you would probably imagine the phrase in a fitness context coming from an elite athlete or hard-core bodybuilder at the top of their game, but when it comes down to it, this is a basic lesson that should be understood and accepted from the very start of a fitness journey. If you are the guy or gal that has sat around on the sofa eating pizza for thirty years, it applies to you as much as it applies to the first person that crosses the finish line of the London marathon or the tour de France winner.

VISUALISATION

If you can see yourself achieving a fitness goal or you can see yourself in the physical condition that you aspire to attain, then this will really help you on your way. Self-belief and visualisation can be a very powerful tool.

There are a lot of people that won't give credence to this aspect of self-made success but I have first-hand experience of it and will always look at it as a vital ingredient to any achievement.

If you believe in yourself, and your cause, your belief will become your armour against the negative factors that are always present in the forging of a fitness achievement. The longer that you believe that you can be what you want to be, and the closer to your goal that you get, the more resilient your armour against this negativity and other hindering forces will become until it becomes impenetrable.

Visualisation was something that I believe I harnessed at an early age but by all accounts I was unaware of the positive sway that this would have on my life. It is probably the biggest help that I get (even today) when I struggle with my self-belief.

Before I lifted my first set of dumbbells or challenged myself to run my first mile, I played rugby. Or to be more accurate, I went to a rugby club every Sunday and joined in with the training. My dad had watched England play rugby on the TV for as far back as I could remember and my sister and I were bought up with this game as default. It was good to spend time with my dad enjoying something that he was passionate about. It wasn't long before I also started to enjoy watching the rugby.

When I was about eleven or twelve, my dad took me to the local rugby club for my first ever training session. There was not a single person that I knew, and all the other boys had

known their team mates in previous years. None of them were newcomers to the game either.

Before this training session I had never even picked up a rugby ball, I was not a sporty, outdoor kid, nor was I socially confident. It also didn't help that I was and still am a slow learner. So as you can imagine, it was an understatement to say that I was out of my comfort zone.

I hated this first training session and didn't want to go back. I dropped every ball that was passed to me to the point that my new team mates would prefer to take the tackle or fumble the ball themselves than pass it to me. I was always in the wrong place, I was wet, cold and very uncomfortable, mentally and physically. For the whole of my first season learning to playing rugby, my dad had to convince me to actually go and train every single Sunday morning. On match days, I would hope that I was a substitute and didn't have to get on the field because I would inevitably make a fool of myself and also let my side down. Luckily, for me, my coaches were sensible enough to see things in the same light. But they would put me on the field every now and again as they must have wanted to keep me interested and "motivated".

I hated not knowing the rules of the game and not knowing what was going on. I probably looked like a hesitant, nervous clown that was predictably going to run the wrong way or cost the team points when I got a "chance to shine" on the field on match days.

As I am a slow learner it took me a while to figure out that when I watched the rugby on TV with my dad, I could ask questions. I could watch what the England player that played in the same position that I was allocated to by my coaches was doing and maybe get some tips from him. After all he did play for England, so that made him the best player for that position in the whole country. What better teacher could there be than this guy?

It turned out that this guy was called Rory Underwood and his position was Wing. He was fast, strong and whenever the ball

came to him, there was a good chance that he was going to put points on the board for England. It was apparent now that I was put in the same position as Rory Underwood, not because I was strong and fast and I was far from a top try scorer. It was because from his position I would be out of the way and therefore likely to see less of the game play and in turn would be less likely to ruin the chances for the rest of the team.

So from now on, Rory Underwood and my dad became my teachers. On the first day that I started taking a bigger interest in the rules and dynamics of the game, there was a “eureka moment” for me. It still makes me want to palm myself in the face and cringe when I found out that my age group only played on a half sized pitch, which meant that the posts and try line (where the guys on TV scored points) were to the side of us, so if I got the ball I would run across the pitch instead of moving forward. So I was basically Forrest Gump without the speed and sense of direction.

Now that things started to fall into place with rugby training, I had my two teachers, I knew which way to run, and things started to generally make more sense to me, I started to enjoy going to rugby. It was not long before I had Rory Underwood posters on my bedroom walls and was scoring some absolutely amazing tries for England in my back yard.... On my own.

It was at this point that the power of visualisation found me and until fairly recently I was totally oblivious to the effect that it had on my achievements. I remember the first rugby match when I actually wanted to be on the pitch rather than shy away and nervously wait as a substitute for the call to join in. On this occasion, we only just had enough players to make up a team so I would be playing a full game anyway.

At the start of the game, before both teams moved onto the pitch ready for kick off, I confirmed with the coaches where the try lines were, so I knew which way to run and where the boundaries were so I would not run off the pitch. When kick off came and that game started, in my eyes, it was the first time that a game that I was playing in resembled one that I had watched on TV. Although the full size pitch was only half the

size, the goal posts had been substituted with small marking cones and the world class stadium and screaming crowds were swapped for an open field and a few dads smoking pipes, but the layout and orientation was now as I understood it. What really made it exciting was that I was stood where Rory Underwood would be stood if he were playing this game.

During this game, I wanted the ball, I could see the try line and I wanted to do what Rory Underwood would do if I was him. Every time the ball came to me I would immediately imagine that I was on the full sized pitch, the few pipe smoking supporters were an excited crowd that jumped to their feet and started cheering me on with a communal roar of anticipation, they would erupt when I carried the ball over the try line and it would be glorious!

There were probably only a few occasions throughout the game where I actually got the ball and managed to gain some ground for the team, but there was one that I will never forget. I remember it as well as the conversation that I had with my biggest fan after the game, my dad.

At some time in the final quarter of the game, one of my team mates passed me the ball, the adrenaline surged, I was Rory Underwood again. I ran towards the try line. As soon as I had caught the ball, I and everyone else knew that I had a very real chance of scoring my first ever try. We were close to the line and I probably only had ten meters to run. My days of running in the wrong direction were over and the try line got closer and closer. From my right I could see my opposite number closing in and heading towards me. When I was two or three meters away from the try line, he had caught me and had gripped my shirt. I felt myself being pulled towards the touch line (out of bounds area) but I carried on moving forward, a few more strides and I could dive for the try line and score. I did just that, the ball was over the line and I held it on the floor, the whistle blew, I heard clapping and some disappointed tones from the spectators.

Lying on the wet grass having carried the ball over the try line was an amazing feeling for a few seconds until I noticed that

my legs were in touch (out of bounds) and the referee had not given the try. I had been pushed out and the ball had technically gone dead before I scored the try so it was at best a “good attempt”. Some of the spectators voiced that I was actually in and the try should have been allowed but in the game of rugby, the referee’s decision is respected.

After this, I didn’t want the game to end, I just wanted another chance to be Rory Underwood and score for England.

After the game, I think that my dad was as excited as I was. He had a big smile on his face and the first thing he said was:

“That was a good game, you were so close there!”

Returning the smile and enthusiasm I replied:

“Yeah I know. I think that it should have been given though, do you?”

I asked with no shortage of optimism.

“I was stood right by it and saw your last two steps. First step, only the edge of your boot went out but the next step was your full boot, so close though, next time”

My dad replied. It must have been a great feeling for him to see that I was finally enjoying playing this sport and that he wouldn’t have to do the dance of convincing me to go and play rugby or train on a Sunday morning any more.

Things drastically changed with my rugby escapades for a few years after this and it was a quick turn around too. One week I hated the whole environment, the cold, the wet and the irresolute feeling that I got when it fell to me to act in a game play situations.

It feels like a long time ago now but this was a clear turning point for me, not only in my sporting life but in valuable lesson learning that would help me out in later life.

After I had a reason to up my game back when I was younger; I didn’t want to embarrass myself on the rugby pitch, I needed to find a way to actually bring the changes about and it just so happened that I stumbled across the act of visualisation. I

gleaned some knowledge from observing one of the best personalities in my topics field and I found Rory Underwood. When I watched him play rugby on the TV, I could imagine how he felt when he caught that ball and turned on his pace as he headed towards the try line. I could imagine how amazing it was to score for your country and to hear the roar of the crowd. This was something that I wanted.

It wasn't until I had visualised this that my outlook towards playing rugby changed, but when it did change, it was a very substantial change. There are a few lessons that I learned from this anecdote regarding fitness and achieving goals but the most significant is the presence of visualisation and the positive power that it can have over someone's entire life. Of course, just because I imagined that I was playing rugby for England, it didn't mean that I got invited onto the England team, but it took me from one end of the scale to the other in terms of, appreciation for the game, physical, mental and social development which as a result enhanced my life considerably.

I believe that I have my dad to thank for this lesson. If he had given up on convincing me to go and play rugby at any of the many chances that he was given to do so, and left me in my comfort zone, it may have been years later that I utilised this phenomenon, knowingly or otherwise, if even at all.

I believe that there is a knock on effect from every important lesson that we learn and act on, be it subliminally or consciously and this was one of the early lessons in my personal journey. I am certain that finding and using the power of visualisation was one of the first blocks of my characters foundation and from visualisation, my self-belief was born to its meek existence ready to be worked into another powerful tool that would be responsible for other leaps of faith later on in my life.

USE THE FORCE!.... OF MOMENTUM

Stick with it. It will pay off!

Have you ever watched The World's Strongest Man competition on TV? If you haven't, you are seriously missing out and you should certainly "YouTube it"!

The organisers come up with outrageous tests of strength and novel ideas that are different every time. Now I'm not going to tell you it's a good idea to go and start flipping cars down the street or start doing squats with a tractor tyre around your neck, but I will say there are some things here that relate to our topic.

On most contests there is a pulling event. This event is "in true strongman style" outrageous!

To the mere mortal, this test will look impossible to even attempt. I remember one year the strongman contestants had to pull a truck along a fifty metre track. The measure of this event was the time it took the contestant to get the truck from a standing start to the point that it crossed the finish line. The contestant with the fastest time won the event.

Each contestant would get themselves ready in front of the enormous lump of metal on wheels by cracking their necks, rolling their shoulders and having the judges strap the huge machine that towered over them to the contestants harness.

When the starting gun was fired, the strongman put all of his energy, aggression and power into getting those massive wheels turning.

The truck just rocks a little at first, hardly worth all of that energy for such a small result hey?

But the more the strong man stuck with it, the more this truck moved, from a slow rock to a very slow crawl, then a faster crawl, then it started to roll nicely, then an amazing turn of pace to the point that the strongman is actually jogging the

truck across the finish line with half the effort he started out with!

So all you need to do is get yourself a truck and a harness and start going for runs with it strapped to you and you will be away!

Only kidding, the point I am trying to make is that the reason that the strongman ended up jogging over the finish line with a truck attached to him is the same reason that you need to stick with your new plans for diet, fitness, healthy living or muscle building.

Momentum! Once you have your momentum going, you will end up jogging your goal over the finish line, not dragging it around with you like a sack of potatoes.

Obviously you will not be dragging big trucks around and your progress will take longer for you to notice.

You are not doing this over several minutes; you are doing this over a longer period of time. So your progress will be harder to measure at the start.

Your progress is more like the magic penny; the results are not apparent right away.

Imagine you did have a huge sack of potatoes on your back that you have to take ever where you go but if you stick to your training and diet plans, you get to take one of the potatoes out at the end of the week.

This is not great for the first several weeks and would probably feel like it wasn't worth doing, but understand that if you are consistent and you always get to take a potato out of the bag each week, you will eventually end up with an empty bag!

An important thing to know here is that if you lose your momentum, the results could be devastating.

Some of the strongmen who attempt the truck pull don't make it to the finish line, they lose momentum.

After they have used all of their energy to get the truck moving, as soon as they allow this truck to slow down, there is no going back, these guys are exhausted and to get this moving again would be impossible.

Pulling trucks and emptying potato sacks are very different in practice but as demonstrated, the principle of achieving results in both examples is the same.

Just like the strongman and his truck, your momentum will turn up. The strongman got his momentum after he put all of his energy into getting that truck moving, once it was moving, it became easier to keep moving, but if he let up on the momentum, the truck would slow down and stop with the momentum also grinding to a halt.

If the momentum is lost, it would have to be kicked off again, this would take the same amount of energy to get going once again and for the strong man it is game over at this point.

Luckily for us, we do not need this kind of energy at the beginning, but we do need some to get the momentum going.

We do however need to start somewhere and as I have mentioned more than once so far in this book, I believe the hardest part is at the starting point. Have a look again at “*Jim’s Motivational fitness concept*”. The example of Dave and Rob shows the loss of momentum and the harnessing of momentum respectively.

SPEED THINGS UP

We have looked at how a few small changes made to a routine or lifestyle can have a big difference over time. Hopefully I have convinced you that this will work as long as you stay focused and consistent.

I know it is hard enough getting started and staying consistent but a lot of a little all goes to add up to a lot in the end. So what if you could just add that little bit more?

This tip is not for everyone but it is worth taking on board. If you have decided to start to walk one mile per day as part of your new weight loss plan.

You could go out there and do your one mile, stop and do it again tomorrow. You would still get your results if you stayed consistent and you would be doing a great job.

However if you decided on some days after you had done your 1 mile to do another $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ mile on top of this you would be doing more than you planned and giving that little bit extra. Just remember that every time you put in more than you are supposed to that this extra effort will also add up to give you heightened results.

This concept is true in whatever you are doing. If you are doing a resistance programme and working with aerobic exercises using sets and reps - you may decide to do 2-4 reps extra per set.

This way you will be adding that little bit more effort on these sets and this in turn will be boosting your results even more over time.

As you may know, I have been into lifting weights for a fair few years and for many of these years I considered myself a bodybuilder.

Like most other bodybuilders I would try to get as many reps as I possibly can out whilst keeping my lifting form.

If I am training on my own I may reach 10 reps and that is good. But if I had my training partner with me he would be able to assist me with probably 2 more reps for each set.

Two more reps does not sound like a lot but I would not have been able to get those two reps out without my training partner and I would have not been able to put this extra effort in.

If I achieve these extra 2 reps on every set, I will be doing a considerable amount more and my results will be better and be achieved more quickly.

You may therefore want to exercise with a training partner or “buddy” so that you can encourage one another.

Doing a little extra exercise every day will soon start to pay off. The opposite is true if you do damaging things often – no matter how small.

This works with your diet. My old colleague that had the fizzy drink problem peaked my interest into the amount of calories a single can of popular sugary drink would contain and the amount of calories that you would consume if you drank a single can every day for a year.

It is frightening to think that you would be putting in 51100 calories with no helpful nutritional value, so if you cut that single can of cola out altogether, you would have effectively burnt off this number of calories in one year without any huge effort. You will have saved yourself pounds and £££s!

If you are on a diet and plan to have a cheat day or you plan to have a small sugary treat every day. To put in that extra bit of effort you could cheat less on your cheat day or have ½ a cheat day. Or you could not have a sugary treat at all on occasional days.

Remember that these seemingly small extras will all eventually add up for good and bad. So let's try and do the good ones.

MAKE IT THAT BIT EASIER

Challenges are a good thing, if you are challenging yourself physically and challenging yourself with sticking to a new routine, you are developing your character as well as your fitness.

This does not mean that you have to squeeze in as many challenges and hardships that you can find to make it as hard as possible. You should focus on your goal and try and find things that will help you achieve that goal.

If we go back to the example of losing weight as our goal, there are things that we can do to help us along with this.

The first thing you can do is surround yourself with positive encouraging people and people that believe in you.

This can be a very important step that is often overlooked and not identified as a helpful exercise and in some cases without these positive people influencing your choices, you may never even try to reach a goal that you are capable of reaching.

You should also look for support from like-minded people. Join a weight loss club or gym. You could also join forums on the internet. Places like this will really help as you will be able to relate to other peoples progress, concerns and setbacks.

It is also a good idea to read about other people's success stories. If these guys can do it then what's to stop you?

A word of warning here though, if you read too much, you may be tempted to keep chopping and changing from one theory to another without giving the first idea a fair chance to work.

For example, you read about someone that has had great results from being on the "Atkins diet" and you do that for a week before reading another story about someone having great results with an "Intermittent fasting diet" and you give that a

go for a week before reading something else you think you want to try.

I'm not a fan of crash diets anyway but you will see what I'm getting at here, get your plan and stick to it for at least six to eight weeks then you might want to tweak it a bit.

Consistency is the key!

YOU HAVE TO WANT AND YOU HAVE TO OWN

I have already talked about finding your reason for making lifestyle changes. Once you have decided this is what you want to do, you have to actually do it! We have all heard of the phrase “actions speak louder than words” well it has never been truer at this point.

If your bad lifestyle choices and habits are well established it will be so much harder to get up and start out with a new way of life.

Making the decision to get in shape, lose weight, become more healthy is the first step of your journey, the next step is in my opinion the hardest. This step is from the point that you start your new healthy routine to the point that you see your first results.

Like the son that took his father’s farm job and started working for a penny on his first day that was covered in an earlier chapter, you will start with very small results, but compounded over time you will start to see some truly amazing changes. If you can understand this and find the will to keep going, you will not become the person who throws in the towel and decides to give up because for all of the work that you have put in you are not getting staggering results right away.

This will take time, so stick with it because once you see this magic working you will not look back and you are over the hardest part, you are on your way to the top of the mountain.

There are many excuses for missing training days or eating junk food when you should be eating healthy or training hard. I have probably heard all the excuses and it is the one thing that frustrates me more than anything.

The bottom line is that there are no excuses. If you are determined to change, you will find the time, prepare the right food and be organised and focused on your goal.

Many people will point the finger when they have cheated or neglected aspects of their new health venture but a game changing realisation is to own 100%.

“I didn’t have time to prepare my healthy lunch today so I will grab some fast food instead”

“I finished work later tonight so I will miss my training session for today”

“I didn’t have time to train this morning before work”

Yeah “The Time” gets a whole lot of grief from millions of people every day and I think that this is unfair. You can look at time as a great reliable friend because it is very consistent, it never changes and surprises you, it is always there and you can set your watch by it.

If you don’t have time in the morning to prepare your healthy meals for the day, you can get up earlier, you can do it last thing at night. If you finish work later, you can still get home and do your training, the gym might be closed but you can do some cardio outside or some bodyweight exercises. Once a good routine has been established, this will become far less of an issue.

A very important lesson in the midst of this lifestyle change, if not the most important thing you need to take away with you is that it is all down to you, you need to own your problems, take 100% responsibility and be 100% accountable for your actions. If you can understand this and put it into action, you will do very well. Remember;

“IF YOU WANT TO DO IT’S UP TO YOU!”

SECTION 2 TAKING ACTION

INTRODUCTION TO SECTION 2

So far I have rambled on about some of the personal experiences and lessons that I have learned through my own fitness undertakings but I also know from personal experience that reading stories and taking on information doesn't mean anything without turning the information into actions.

This is the hard part and as you have seen, the lack of planning and understanding can be the breaking of a fitness drive. So in this section, I have designed a chart for you to utilise and help you on your journey. Having a physical record of your ongoing plan to track your progress and help you stay focused is an extremely valuable tool that is hugely overlooked.

I have designed this so it is quick and easy to set up and it will take less than ten minutes per week to update. This chart will help you to personalise the subjects discussed in section one and further enforce their meanings. If you work through the subsequent exercises in this section, by the end of it you should have a clearer idea of where you stand, what might be holding you back, you will have a plan and a starting point and most importantly, you will be much better equipped and prepared to start and achieve your new fitness goals.

This part of the book is important. If you take this seriously and actually put pen to paper it is a big step in the right direction. I love to hear that anyone that has read my books has taken the advice, acted on it and is on the way to earning their results.

The planning and preparation of a fitness ambition is a major player in its success rate so, lay the strong foundations and let's get building.

Most people's first step on a fitness journey will be to join a gym, buy an exercise routine book or DVD or even put their training shoes on and go for a run. But it will really help if you look at this part as the starting point. Take the time to plan. This is the first training session of your fitness journey!

Here is an example of the chart. I have used an instance of my “past self”. As you are aware of my fitness background, my goals and the earlier struggles that I faced when it came to fitness, as explained in section one, this example may help you to more easily connect with the idea of creating a chart that is relevant to yourself.

When I was around fourteen years of age, rugby was my passion and I loved the game but I was a slow developer among my peers. Physically, it seemed that I was about a year behind everyone else and at this age, that is a long way behind. This meant that I was smaller and weaker than the rest of the rugby team and I would once again be a liability on the rugby pitch. I needed to get bigger and stronger if I wanted to play this game with my peers.

Logically, the best way to get bigger and stronger is to hit the gym and start lifting weights, eat more quality food, and this is exactly what I did. So if I were at this point again and I knew what I know now and furthermore, I decided to create a chart based on this book, the first week would look like this:



5 positive things that happened this week

- Found someone to coach me with weights
- Found a training partner
- Learned how to cone workouts
- Wasn't ovary late for school once
- Feeling positive about my plan

Get bigger and stronger so I can play a great game of rugby!

week	Habit /change + Substitute	Training days	Reward
1	Train with weights 3 times per week	Mon, Wed, Fri	Cheat food on Sat night
2	Eat + balanced meals per day	Mon, Wed, Fri	Cheat food on Sat night
3	Drink a protein shake every day	Mon, Wed, Fri	Cheat food on Sat night
4	Sprint training once per week	Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat	Cheat food on Sat night
5	Practice catching for an hour per week	Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat, Sun	Cheat food on Sat night
6	Watch 1 pro rugby game per week	Mon, Wed, Fri, Sat, Sun	Cheat food on Sat night
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			

STEP 1: PREP YOUR CHART

Your chart is going to be a creation that is unique and relevant to you. This is a piece of work that will be ongoing and will serve as a kind of elaborate diary that serves a purpose. As this is your own creation, please feel free to devise your own if you would prefer a better layout or you would like to add something to it.

If you don't have any ideas that will enhance this chart to fit in with your personal needs, by all means print this one off or download the PDF template from _____

In my chart example, there are seven features:

1. Reason for wanting to achieve the goal
 2. 5 positive experiences that happened this week
 3. A week counter to align several features on the chart (used to monitor progress)
 4. Habits to change or changes to make and substitute (if any)
 5. Training days
 6. Visualisation aid "*pin visualisation aid here*"
 7. A reward Colum
- However you decide to obtain a physical version of your chart, make sure you have at least one copy and a template of it that you can easily duplicate. Make sure that you keep the template version of this chart in a safe place, which is easily accessible. The best thing to do is to have a bunch of these charts printed off so that when you fill one up, you can easily pin a new one over the top and carry on with no hassle.
 - Once you have your chart, you need to find a suitable home for it. Ideally, the chart should be pinned up in a room in your house where you will see it frequently. The kitchen or bathroom tend to be

good choices as they are normally easily accessible and they see the most activity. If you are following a home workout routine, you could put the chart in the room where you exercise. The idea is to have this chart somewhere where it will always be seen so it will be no good if you choose your attic or store room that you only visit once per month. When you have a good location for your chart, attach a pen with some string or just clip it on (you don't want to be searching for something to write with every time you need to fill it in). Finally, pin it up!

(On the following page, there is a blank chart that you may want to photocopy and blow up if you cannot get the direct download for whatever reason. You can even cut this out of the book if you have the paperback copy)

SwapFat4Fit

5 positive things that happened this week

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week	Habit /change + Substitute	Training days	Reward
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			

STEP 2: FIND YOUR REASON

If you have a powerful reason, when things get tough, you can reflect on this and use it as a driving force.

When the time comes for you to define your reason/ reasons for wanting to achieve a certain fitness goal, as mentioned before, you should take it seriously and make sure that you set aside some time to dedicate to this important step. It may sound like a bit of a chore or even feel silly but please have faith in this process; it will make all the difference. Follow these bullet points before moving on to step 3:

- Set aside at least fifteen minutes, where you are alone and in a place that you will not be interrupted.
- Sit down with a physical notepad and pen or even open a word document on your pc
- List all of the reasons that you would like to achieve your fitness goal. Remember to be honest with yourself. The more honest that you can be and the deeper that you can delve, the more powerful your reasons will be.
- If you are struggling, feel free to read the “*It starts with a reason*” chapter again, this may give you some ideas or inspiration.
- Once you have a powerful reason or a statement that encompasses several of your reasons for your fitness goal, fill in the space provided on your chart. Make it big, bold and colourful if you like. This needs to stand out.

- If you have decided to use the example chart that I have created, great! You will notice the space on there for your reason is fairly big and you may even want to put a visual aid in here to help too. You could use a photograph, quote or anything else that is significant to your reason..

STEP 3 MENTAL ROBUSTNESS

Achieving fitness and fat loss goals is a mentally challenging game and to win, you need to have a good resolve when it comes to mental robustness.

This planning process and the upkeep of your chart are actually working to develop your mental robustness. Although the development of mental robustness is something that grows as your fitness levels progress, there are a few exercises that you can do to actively help with the process.

For the purpose of this book and with the plan of achieving impressive fitness results, I would like to focus on the subject of positivity. Being positive in everyday life is absolutely huge and is most definitely a game changer. If you can train your mind to always see the positive in any situation and break free of negativity, you will open the gates not only to fitness success but to all types of other advantages in your life in general.

On the example chart in this book, there is a section that is slightly separate. You may want to have a completely separate piece of paper for this but I would advise that you keep your chart as close to a single entity as you can, this way, you are organised and will have a less convoluted view of your chart. So if you do use a separate sheet, you should attach it somehow.

FILLING IN YOUR CHART

- When it comes to filling in the “5 positive events” section on your chart, you should use events that have happened during your previous week. These don’t all have to be fitness related, they could be anything that you have personally recognised as positives over the course of your week. Take a look at the example chart again if you need to. Remember, this is your chart so it’s your judgement.
- Make sure that you do this on your first week. This may very well be on the eve of your first training day or before you have even started but it is a great exercise and measure of your current level of positivity. It may be hard now but it will be extremely liberating to look back on in six weeks’ time and recognise the extent of the development of your mental attitude.
- When you are done filling in the “5 positive events” part of your chart, you should take at least thirty seconds to acknowledge your reason and visual aid if you have one. While you have positive thoughts and energy running through you, it is a great time to reflect on your reasons and the picture in your “visualisation” section of your chart. Remember why you are doing this and promise that you will keep going. The longer that you stick to your routine and new lifestyle plans, the more progress you will have documented. It is always good to look back and recognise how much you have developed. The longer you are in the game, the more impressive your results will be.

EVERYDAY AWARENESS

Building and strengthening your mental robustness is an ongoing project, just as developing your physical fitness is. If you are a negative person already, you may find that identifying five instances of positive encounters in a week is a hard task. But if you are actively seeking out positive occurrences throughout the week, you will soon find that five examples aren't enough and you can maybe lengthen your quota to ten.

This is why I have added an extra bit to this step. Here is a list of actions that you can easily work on during your everyday life. At work, at home and when you are out and about.

- Learn to spot negativity and when you spot it, find a positive. Everybody has a negative streak to them but some more than others. Look out for situations in everyday life that show negativity. It may be a close friend or family member that tells you to be less ambitious, it may be a work colleague voicing a negative opinion at a meeting or you may even recognise yourself spouting negativity. As soon as you actively identify your first situation, you will start to see it a lot more frequently.
- When you do encounter an instance of negativity, you should always find a positive counteraction. However dire the situation is, there are always positives.
- If you are in doubt about positivity and mental robustness, you can refresh your memory with the chapter; “Mental challenges” for a reminder of how important mental strength can be.

STEP 4 CHANGE & HABITS

If you want to earn results from a fitness routine. It means that you will be working towards something that you don't already have, and to bring about results, you have to make changes.

The bottom line is that whether you like it or not, your body's physical state is a product of your ongoing habits and lifestyle choices. This means that if you are not 100% happy with your fitness level or your body's physical appearance with regards to the variables that you have control over such as, body fat percentage, muscle mass etc. Then you need to look at what the cause of your discontent is and address it.

Step 4 is about making regular small changes over a period of time and it fits in really well on your chart. The idea is to make one or two changes per week. This means that you will be able to focus on one thing at a time. The longer that you make these changes for, the more changes you will be benefitting from.

FILLING IN YOUR WALL CHART

- The first thing to do is to identify any bad habits that you have. You should use a notepad to draft these ideas on. The more bad habits you can list or changes that you would like to make the better. These should be specific changes, the more general the changes are, the harder they will be to initiate or keep track of. For example; if you want to start eating a healthier diet, you should not just write down “eat more healthy food”. You should make it specific; you can work on creating a healthy diet over several weeks. An example for a single change in the healthy diet area would be “eat at least one portion of spinach every day”.
- Once you have a good sized list of changes (ideally at least ten) you should decide on how many changes you would like to implement each week. I would suggest at least one but no more than two. It may feel like a great idea to get all these changes done as soon as possible but in reality, this will put more strain on you need. Remember that the idea is small focused changes over time. This will result in big changes overall.
- Decide on which changes or habits are most important to you and number them. Once this is done, you should write them on your final chart in the corresponding weeks. These changes and habit substitutions are now official. You should fill in the chart for the coming six weeks at least.
- After each week passes, you should put a big tick over the habit that you changed. If you did not do it, you should strike through it. If for any reason you

do not stick to this habit change, carry on with the previous weeks change but do not neglect the new one that you should be focusing on in the coming week. This way, you will always be progressing and a little bump in the road should not force you to start your journey from the beginning again.

STEP 5 TRAIN SMART

Deciding to follow an exercise routine is one thing but picking a routine that works to most efficiently help you to achieve your fitness goals is another. It is all too common for me to have a conversation with a beginner to fitness about their training requirements and the goals that they want to reach. I am often told that all they want to do is lose weight so there is no need for a resistance exercise programme or weight training routine of any kind.

I always feel like a broken record when I have to explain that an aspect of resistance training should always be incorporated into any balanced exercise routine. By targeting the major muscles of the body with regular resistance exercises will help to build and tone muscle, help with posture, circulation, and fat loss to name a few of the many benefits. And to make your workouts as efficient as they can be, or to put it another way, get the most for your efforts, you should never neglect the resistance side of things, especially if your goal is to lower your body fat percentage.

Having a mix of cardiovascular training (walking, jogging, biking, rowing etc) and resistance training (lifting barbells and dumbbells, using exercise bands and bodyweight exercises etc) is not the only thing that you should look for in a fitness routine. Here is a list of components that in my opinion make an efficient training routine that will give you good results if you are consistent in completing your sessions:

- A good training routine should have some form of cardiovascular training and also some form of resistance training.
- It should be progressive. This means that the exercises should have more than one “upgrade” i.e. it should be progressive in nature, have targets to hit and have several a week timescale. This progression

will keep you moving forward and give you chance to plan out your subsequent weeks of training.

- It should be sustainable. This means that you should be able to continue it for the foreseeable future and build on the basic routine.
- It should take a holistic view and not just target on area of the body. Routines that are set to target “abs”, “bums and tums”, “biceps” or any other body part alone are what I would call “ancillary workouts”. They may be good for the muscle group in question but they should be viewed as routines that can be used alongside a more substantial training programme.
- If you would like some inspiration or need a solid training routine to get ideas from or to follow completely, I have written several of these for different training goals. So if you would like to jump right in and get started with one of these, you can have a look to see if any would suite you by going to JimsHealthAndMuscle.com. I'll see you there!

FILLING IN YOUR WALL CHART

- Pick the right routine for you. Make sure that you have a good routine that adheres to the criteria above. Again, feel free to check out my website to see if there is something for you.
- Decide when your training days will be each week. I would suggest training at least three times per week on the same day and time. Once you have sorted this out, you should write these days down on your wall chart. Make sure that you fill these days in on your chart for at least six weeks in advance, this way you can tick them off as you go, you will also be able to monitor your progress and have a form of accountability. Make sure to book out time in your diary or schedule for your training. Treat this with the importance of a business meeting, dental appointment or even court summons. There is always time! If you are reading this and feeling unconvinced, please revisit the “*excuses excuses*” chapter for a refresher.
- After each training session, Tick it off, highlight it with a bright marker, stick a gold star or smiley face sticker over it, just mark sure that you mark it in some way that stands out brightly and positively, if you miss a training session for whatever reason, mark it off with a dark colour or a strike through.

REWARD YOURSELF

If you are making big changes to your lifestyle in order to earn fitness success, it can be very hard and feel like you are sacrificing an awful lot. The newer you are to healthy living and fitness training, the harder it will be. For instance, one of the more common reasons for a healthy dieting failure is the thought of never being able to eat your favourite foods ever again.

I can totally empathise with this. I have always had a big appetite and when it comes to pizza, burgers, cheese, chocolate and all of the take away foods that you would associate with unhealthy living, I would be at the front of the queue every time if you could eat this type of food whilst maintaining a good fitness level and physique. When I get invited out for a few drinks with the guys on occasion, I will also be the first there drinking beer and the last to finish on an all-day drinking session.

This may make me sound like a raving alcoholic with an eating disorder and also paint me as a total hypocrite, but the facts are that you do not need to give up everything that you enjoy. You just need to moderate it.

Food is one of my weaknesses but I have managed to get into a good routine of having a cheat meal once per week. Every Saturday night, my girlfriend and I order a takeaway, put on a movie and eat all of the “good stuff” even throwing in, cakes chocolate or other “stickie’s” for desert. So every Saturday night is a night to look forward to and I can tell you that if you are a fast food or chocolate lover and you work hard in staying away throughout the week, when it comes to “cheat night”, that food never tasted so good. It is always the best food you have ever eaten which makes it more than worth the wait.

Not everyone is driven by food though, some might like to do a lot of clothes shopping online, have a bottle of wine or a few beers, have a massage or play computer games. The value of a reward can best be determined by the trainer themselves.

FILLING IN YOUR WALL CHART

- Make a list of all of the things that you enjoy doing that have potential to hold you back, ruin your fitness efforts or cost you dearly in some other way ie, if you quit this, it would save you money, time and it does not really offer any real value to your lifestyle.
- Decide if you would like to cut them out completely or start to work on moderating these activities. Once you have decided on which activities you would like to use as your rewards, you can then decide how to fit them in to your new lifestyle.
- In the rewards column on your wall chart, fill in your chosen reward for the completion of each weeks training, this can be the same every week or you can decide to increase the value of the reward the further that you get into your training. This way, the longer you stay in the game, the better the rewards will be. Another way to fill this in is to have small rewards on a daily basis. For example, if your rewards are diet related, you could have one 100 calorie treat at the end of the day. Obviously a large stuffed crust pizza with extra cheese and garlic bread every day for keeping on track is not a great way to go about rewarding yourself so be sensible if you go down this route. Personally, I have the same reward every week and one cheat night every week works well for me. This was hard at first but after a month or two, I was able to cope a lot better and even after a few years of this, the novelty has not worn off.

- It is a good idea to fill in the “rewards” section of your wall chart for at least the next six weeks. This way you are planning ahead and once you have reached a reward, tick it off, highlight it in bright colours or use your golden star stickers to make it stand out.

WHEN IT GETS TOUGH... AND IT WILL GET TOUGH.

Things will almost definitely get tough! It might be in your first week, it might be in your third but everyone struggles at times. If this is the first time that you have tried to stick to a diet plan, fitness routine, or lifestyle change, I can tell you that it will get you down at some stage and you will feel like cheating on your diet, skipping a workout or buying those cigarettes that you have done so well without for the last week or so.

I am no stranger to this place and if there is one thing that has made it increasingly easier for me to stick to my fitness plans over the years when the urges to cheat on my diet or miss a workout is the crushing feeling that I got when I did cave in and eat a bunch of chocolate or miss my workout. It is never worth it. The second I'd finished the "cheat chocolate bar", nothing was any better, the only thing that was different was that my clean record had a blemish on it and that could not be undone. Now the clean record was no longer clean, I may as well make the cheat count, so I would go all in and get more chocolate or junk food. In reality, one chocolate bar is not going to break the bank and I believe that a small slip like this can result in an "in for a penny in for a pound" attitude with most people.

This may be a lesson that has to be personally learned before being fully appreciated so if you do find yourself in this situation, please remember not to "go all in". A great way to look at it is like this:

If you looked at your day as a percentage and you were good up until you cracked and ate the chocolate bar, it's not a massive loss because you could still finish the day at 90% good. But if you decided to go all in because you believe that all is lost, you could end up having a day that was 90% bad and that is not where you want to be. Remember to be positive!

The main reason for the wall chart is to keep you on track and if you make this your own, you should use it to draw support from. When you struggle, you might want to go and study it.

- Look at your reason and remember why you are doing this
- Visualise yourself achieving your goal
- Look at motivational quotes.
- The glass is half full! Read your positive experiences
- Look at your progress

The very concept of creating a wall chart may sound silly and sitting in front of it to study it may sound even sillier but believe me, the more work that you put in to this and the more seriously that you approach it, the better that your chances will be. Do not underestimate the power that a physical, visual progression document can have on the outcome of your fitness and lifestyle goals.

FINAL THOUGHTS

There is a lot of information to take in in this book, and I fully understand that many people that read this will decide not to take the time to create a wall chart or any other form of fitness monitoring and tracking system as it may seem like a lot of pointless work and will not feel like it will help towards the final fitness goal.

But any type of fitness goal that is worth earning is not easy work and any edge that you can utilise is worth the time. This is especially true when it comes to developing a solid foundation for your plans. Mind-set plays an extremely important part in your success so do not neglect this if you really do want some jaw dropping fitness results.

I would like to wish you the best of luck with your health and fitness endeavours and please remember that I would be happy to help you out where I can, so if you have any questions or need some further pointers, I would be glad to help you, please don't hesitate to contact me through one of my websites or social media channels and I will be more than happy to give any advice that I can.

I hope that this has been useful to you and I look forward to hearing of your success.

All the best

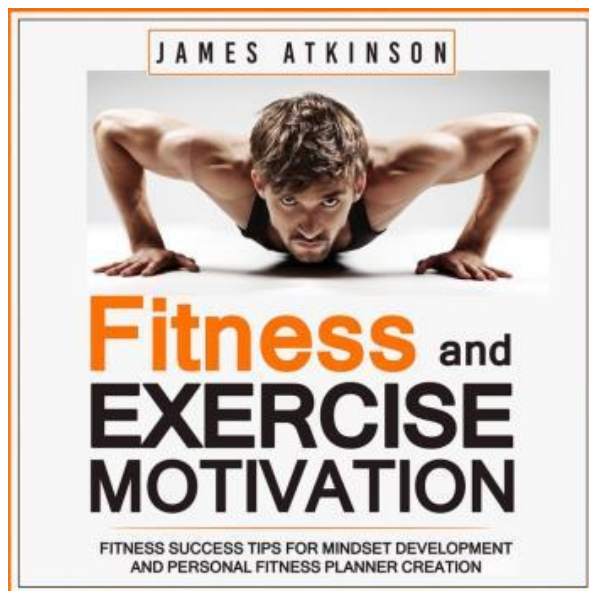
Jim

(James Atkinson)

FITNESS AND EXERCISE MOTIVATION

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IF YOU ENJOYED THIS BOOK, YOU MAY ALSO LIKE....

I would like to thank you for reading and again wish you every success with your future fitness plans, whatever they may be. I will also leave you with an excerpt from one of my other books that you may find will compliment this and help you develop your training. This is all about “supersets”

Excerpt from: Jim’s weight training guide “Superset style”



HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THIS BOOK

Because there are many different ways to train with resistance exercise and there are many different goals that can be aspired to, i.e. bodybuilding, endurance, fat loss, etc., the full contents of this book may not be relevant to everyone.

If you are looking for ideas to use superset training to attain results in different areas of fitness, the full content will be useful; but if you are looking for ideas on using superset

training for the area of fitness that you are currently involved with, you will probably be able to skip a few chunks of content and revisit it again if you change your fitness goals at a later date.

The book has been split into four sections:

Section 1: Covers some of the fundamentals in resistance training. These fundamentals are not only relevant to superset training but they will serve as a solid foundation on which to build any resistance workout routine. Some of this information may also be a nice memory refresher to the basic principles behind weight training for the veteran.

Section 2: Covers a selection of example superset workout routines that can be followed directly from the book or modified to suit your personal needs / goals. Some of these example routines may not be relevant to everyone. If you are not interested in some of the training effects outlined, skipping past this information is not a big deal, although it might be useful to see how supersets are employed in different training situations. This might give you some ideas when it comes to designing your own bespoke training plan.

Section 3: Gives you all of the information that you need to start planning your own superset training plan. If you wish to follow one of the workout plans that were covered in the previous section, feel free to skip this section. I would advise, however, that you do take a look as there may be something in here that will encourage you to modify your workout plan to make it a bit more bespoke. Even a few little tweaks here and there can make a big difference in the long run.

Section 4: This is the section with the exercise descriptions. All of the exercises that are mentioned in the example workout routines are illustrated here. Each exercise description has at least two clear studio quality photographs showing the various stages of the exercise, along with a written account of how to perform the movement safely and correctly. Please have a look at these even if you normally use these exercises on a regular

basis already. We are all guilty of falling into bad habits when it comes to exercise form and I believe that performing any resistance exercise correctly is one of the top priorities of any workout routine.

INTRODUCTION: WHAT ARE SUPERSETS?

Shortly after the creation of fire but before man invented the wheel, there was a clever little training method developed that was called “Supersets”.

As you can see from this brief but accurate account of the origin of supersets, this manner of fitness training has been around for a long time. Like everything else in life, when something has been around for a while, it tends to develop and evolve — and superset training is no exception to this rule.

I have seen superset exercises used in all types of training by all types of trainers and gym rats alike. But due to the lack of structure in this training, I have noticed that, on many occasions, the result or training effect would be far from optimal.

In other words: Why bother training in a certain way if it’s not really going to make a difference?

First things first; what is superset training? In the simplest terms, superset training is:

“A sequence of two exercises performed directly after each other with no rest.”

It is fairly safe to say that a huge percentage of the population that have trained or looked at examples of different fitness routines will be familiar with the concept of superset training.

But I know from experience that a huge proportion of these guys will not know how to utilize the superset method of training to its full potential. It seems that the usual approach to using superset training is to randomly throw it in on certain muscle groups and training days.

JAMES ATKINSON



**6 WEEK
FITNESS PROGRAM**

**WITH FAT BURNING WORKOUTS
& FITNESS MOTIVATION FOR
WEIGHT LOSS FOR LIFE**

**HOME
WORKOUT
FOR BEGINNERS**

BOOK #2 - HOME WORKOUT FOR
BEGINNERS

*Exercise At Home,
Get Fit With This Effective
6 Week Guided Routine*

JAMES ATKINSON

INTRODUCTION

It's common knowledge that regular exercise and a balanced diet are an integral part of a healthy lifestyle. Most people believe this, indeed, every New Year great numbers of people, with the desire to make such a change to their lives, embark on new fitness or weight-loss endeavours. Yet so often, as the weeks and months roll on, the gym memberships go unused, the diets become slowly neglected and motivation (and often self-esteem with it) plummets.

Why do so many people struggle to reach their health and fitness goals? What causes them to fail?

It was these kinds of questions that were the driving force behind this book. They prompted me to look back on my own experience as both a fitness enthusiast and as a personal trainer. I have been involved in health and fitness for around twenty years and in that time I have had the pleasure of seeing many people achieve their goals. Sadly, I've seen just as many fail.

One common problem seems to be a matter of expectations. The proliferation of "quick fix" options out there is fuelling an improper mind-set for long-term fitness success. Many people want to get fit and slim right now, not understanding that lasting results take time and perseverance. Another issue I have seen is a

lack of proper planning. Too often people repeat the same exercises week in, week out. After an initial boost to their health and fitness, the results begin to taper off and they become disillusioned.

For some though, the journey towards a healthier lifestyle can be even harder by the fact that they may be dealing with an injury, perhaps cannot get to a gym, or simply have no idea where to begin!

It is with these challenges in mind that I developed the Home Workout for Beginners. The training routine inside assumes no prior knowledge or skill and can be done at home with minimal equipment. It provides a structured plan that will progress gradually over six weeks.

Whatever your motivation for picking up this book; whether you want to lose excess weight, tone and shape your body, or simply increase your physical and mental wellness, you will find that this progressive exercise routine will help you achieve your goals. Be this your first, third, or thirteenth time at beginning a fitness regime, you will have all the tools you need in these pages to make this one a lasting success.

Why should you take my advice?

Well, professionally speaking, I am a WABBA certified fitness coach. I have spent time conducting group circuit-training classes and been a personal trainer, working with many people to help them burn body fat,

increase strength, and build muscle. In recent years I have turned my focus to writing and publishing fitness guides, many of which have reached bestseller status on the Amazon market place.

But, it may also interest you to know that my own journey to health and fitness success was far from easy. As a kid I was somewhat slow to develop physically. Generally small and weak compared to my peers, I struggled in sports at school and in young adulthood I spent some time in the overweight category. I developed a passion for health and fitness in my early teens, inspired by Arnold Schwarzenegger.

This made me realise what the human body, with the help of correct mind-set, was capable of. I wanted to be like Arnold! In my twenties I made this dream a reality, competing in my first bodybuilding competition. In my time I've also been a long distance runner, and served a number of years in the British Army in an airborne unit (9 parachute squadron Royal Engineers). Throughout these experiences I've learned some valuable lessons from many mistakes and triumphs. In this book I draw on knowledge from both my professional and personal experiences.

Earning fitness results is not easy but my goal is to give you the key information that makes this journey as comfortable and efficient as possible. If you are up for the challenge, I am ready and waiting to help you reach your fitness and weight loss goals. Your success matters to me, so please don't hesitate to give me a shout if you

need any further advice or encouragement. You can reach me through my website at JimsHealthAndMuscle.com.

You can do this!

GRAB YOUR BONUS

I strongly believe that with effort and consistency anyone can achieve the fitness results they want. To help you along with the diet aspect of your journey, I have created a collection of recipes for you to download for free.

Everyone who knows me knows that I love food, but living a healthy lifestyle means that some of the best foods are out of bounds... Or are they?

I have played around in the kitchen and created some great recipes (and some abominations, but fortunately for you, I will not share these) that are low in fat, low in sugar but high in nutritional value and, most importantly, they taste great!

As a 'thank you' for your interest in my book and to help you kick-start your healthier lifestyle, I would like to give you these seven healthy recipes for free.

Simply click on the link below, if you're reading this electronically, or copy it into your web browser and click on 'Sign Up Now'.

<https://jimshealthandmuscle.com/healthy-recipes-sign-up/>

Happy cooking!

WHAT YOU WILL NEED

The start of any lifestyle change can be daunting; indeed it can be completely overwhelming if there are too many barriers in place. I've thought carefully about this when designing this programme and have made every effort to remove the most common barriers. I have considered cost, time, and convenience, and have tried to make this very affordable.

As such, this exercise plan can be done at home in a relatively short space of time, making it easy to fit into your daily routine. There are a few pieces of basic, inexpensive equipment that you will need before you begin:

- Suitable clothing and footwear:
 - A good pair of running shoes. Don't panic! You won't be running in these right away, good running shoes are great for most forms of exercise.
 - Outdoor clothing and high visibility jacket or strips for clothing.
- Resistance bands.
 - You can buy single resistance bands, but I suggest investing in a set. A resistance band set has several different attachments and bands of varying resistance. With such a set, you will

have plenty of scope for progression and effectively own a compact travel gym.

- This is the set that I used in conjunction with this routine –



- An exercise ball.
- A stopwatch or timekeeping app (Most phones have one built in)

THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

The main draw to this book may be the six week training routine but there is far more value to it than just following along with the practical part. It's great that you now have a beginner home workout to follow but in my opinion, if you understand the principals behind why you are doing what you are doing, you will gain far more value from this book than you would if you simply took my word for it and followed the workouts. Most beginners to fitness will have a goal in mind, and to achieve this they tend to start with the most obvious form of exercise.

For example, if the goal is to lose weight, they might go for a run or jump on an exercise bike or even a rowing machine. If they want to gain muscle, they may grab some dumbbells and start doing some bicep curls. The problem with this common approach is that without a structured plan there will be no foundation in place to fall back on when the inevitable waves of doubt, loss of motivation, or plain tiredness, that are a part of every single fitness endeavour, come crashing in.

This six-week exercise plan is designed to guard against these common causes of fitness and weight-loss venture abandonment. By understanding the essential elements of this routine, you will have a better knowledge of how to design and plan your own

workouts so you can keep progressing beyond week six.

Right now your main goal may be to lose weight, tone your body, or simply get healthy, but perhaps in the future you may want to challenge yourself further, perhaps even enter a sporting race or event. While my main aim here is to offer the novice a realistic, comfortable and non-daunting entry to fitness and exercise, I hope that it will also give you the confidence and ability to accomplish whatever fitness goal you may set your mind to.

No matter what the end goal is, be it to lose weight, run a 5K, a full marathon, or enter a body-building competition, every good fitness plan will have the following essential elements. It is the absence of one or more of these which leads so many people to give up.

Every beginner's exercise regime should be:

- **Realistic and appropriate** for your current level of fitness and skill.
- **Convenient.** It needs to fit in with your lifestyle.
- **Progressive**, challenging you more over time.
- **Planned** in advance with a schedule to follow and targets to hit.
- **Diverse**, including a good mix of cardio and resistance.

Any training plan with these qualities will provide a solid foundation upon which to build. The routine that is outlined in this book ticks all of these boxes. It will help you out all the more if you embrace a positive mind-set and stay consistent with your training.

HEALTH CHECK

Before you embark on any fitness routine, please consult your Doctor.

1. Do not exercise if you are unwell.
2. Stop if you feel pain, and if the pain does not subside, consult your Doctor.
3. Do not exercise if you have taken alcohol or had a large meal in the last few hours.
4. If you are taking medication, please check with your Doctor to make sure it is okay for you to exercise.
5. If in doubt at all, please check with your Doctor first – you may even want to take this routine and go through it with them. It may be helpful to ask for a blood pressure, cholesterol and weight check. You can then have these taken again in a few months to see the benefit.

FOOD

This book is focused on beginner exercise, which is a major part of living a healthy lifestyle. However, exercise and nutrition go hand in hand so I have put together some tips and good practices that will be highly effective when incorporated alongside your exercise routine.

Food plays a very important part in creating your body composition and fuelling your body. If you are eating too much of the wrong foods, your body composition will change accordingly. If you eat too little food, your body will work with the fuel that you have given it, making cut backs to the detriment of its function. Food and diet can be an extremely detailed subject and there are many theories and practices that seem to contradict each other. Some will claim to give you amazing weight loss or phenomenal muscle growth.

The truth is that many of these diet ideas and theories will work if they are practiced consistently. However, in my opinion, it's best to keep it simple as there is no substitute for a good knowledge of basic nutrition.

Making nutritional and dietary changes that compliment your training will help to speed up your training progression so it's worth taking note of these. With any lifestyle change, I believe that if there are too

many changes going at once, it can become overwhelming.

Keeping track of a bunch of new practices can be too much of a hurdle for most and there is no need to make things more difficult than they need to be. Since an exercise routine is a large change to incorporate into your life, I would advise that you initially just make yourself aware of the food that you are eating, making only small and gradual changes when you are ready. Remember that a lot of small changes over time will result in a big change in the end.

Here are some simple ways to start building good food habits. You may want to make one of these changes every week until eventually you are practicing all of these suggestions.

- **Don't skip meals** – As a beginner, this is a good practice to help your metabolism function correctly. Eat three to four nutritionally balanced meals every day. Theories such as intermittent fasting are sound but I would advise that these practices are looked into when you become more experienced as a possible progression.
- **Drink lots of water** – Aim to drink at least two litres of water per day. Water is so crucial to our health; indeed our bodies are 50-65% water. Water is needed for numerous bodily

functions. It is needed for digestion and the removal of wastes and toxins from the body. Water is vital for healthy brain and cell functioning. It helps to transport oxygen around the body and aids in the absorption of vitamins and minerals. Drinking plenty of water is one of the most basic ways you can improve your health. Conversely, sugary drinks, including sodas, energy drinks, and juices, have an extremely high sugar content. Sugar in this refined form has no nutritional benefit and will seriously hamper your weight-loss and fitness efforts. If in doubt about the make-up of any drink, steer clear of it.

- **Cut back on chocolate, sweets and desserts** – Most sticky favourites are full of sugar, fat, and generally have no nutritional value. It may seem like a boring life without some sweet treats from time to time but on the whole you will find that your health and weight-loss changes will come faster if you're also cutting down on unnecessary, nutritionally “empty” calories. Make a note of how many sweet treats you currently eat and aim to cut that down by half. If you have a sweet craving, try using this as an opportunity to train your body to gain the same satisfaction from a piece of fruit; switch out a biscuit for an orange or two.
- **Eat lean meat** – If you eat meat, always use the lean cuts for your meals. White fish,

chicken, or turkey breast are a good choice. Cuts of beef with low fat content can be used occasionally throughout the week.

- **Snack on vegetables and nuts** - If you tend to snack a lot, switch out the pre-made, processed snacks for more natural ones. Try munching on raw veggies, such as carrots or celery sticks. Apple slices or mandarin oranges make great lunchbox additions, or you may want to try unsalted nuts and dried fruit for an appetite-curbing snack.
- **Add more whole grains, beans, fruits, and vegetables into your diet** – A good start is to add a portion of greens to every evening meal. Try mangetout, green beans, or broccoli. These are really easy to stir-fry and full of goodness. If you're feeling adventurous, try juicing vegetables a few times per week. Switch out white rice and pasta for their wholegrain counterparts. Try adding some fresh fruit to your breakfast cereal.
- **Slow down and eat less at each meal** – Eating smaller portion sizes is, perhaps not surprisingly, a really effective strategy for losing weight. It can be a lot easier to implement if you simply make an effort to eat slower. Many people rush through their meals, barely finishing one mouthful before stuffing the next one in. You may find it hard at first to

slow down because it requires you to focus and pay more attention to your food. A good tip here is to put your knife and fork on the table after each mouthful, waiting until you have chewed and swallowed before picking them up again. Savour and enjoy every mouthful till the end. Taste the flavours and feel the textures of the food. You'll be surprised at how long a meal can last and how satisfied you can feel with less.

- **Don't cut out your favourite cheat foods altogether** – This can lead to feelings of restriction and resentment. Instead, plan to have one of your favourites only once per week. But be careful not to use this as an opportunity to binge! Moderation is key.

This is a list of things that you can work towards. I strongly advise changing just one thing at a time, rather than trying to change everything at once. Remember that we're aiming for long-lasting success here, not a quick-fix, so a gradual approach is best. By making one change per week, or even per fortnight, you will only have one thing to focus on at a time. This will lighten the load and allow time for your new healthy habits to set in.

A WORD ON MOTIVATION

To have picked up this book in the first place you must already have some degree of motivation to make a change. You may even find that during the first few days of your new fitness endeavour your motivation remains high. However, I feel that it's important to talk about motivation briefly here so that you will be better prepared for what is to come.

The beginning of any new fitness regime will require hard work and dedication. You will need to stay committed to building new healthy habits even when you become tired and your motivation begins to wane. That's the thing about motivation – it comes and goes, and this makes it an unreliable factor in fitness and weight-loss endeavours. Just being aware of this will help you to recognize when this becomes an issue for you.

It may come as a surprise to learn that some of your biggest challenges will be mental rather than a physical. For a beginner, the early stages of a new training program can be tough, as the habits and routines are not yet firmly set in place. Changing your daily life like this can be a little uncomfortable to begin with. I've been there myself and can totally empathise. However, I know that if you stay committed through this initial challenge, your training will gain momentum and you will find it easier as the days and weeks go by.

Eventually you'll find it harder to stop than to keep going!

I love to think of fitness training, weight-loss ventures, or any other long-term challenge in this way; if you have “lots of a little bit of something,” you will end up with “a lot”. Of course, it works both ways with the human body. If you eat a few chocolate bars every day and don't burn off the extra calories, you will put on some, if not a lot, of fat. In this programme we're going to be building new healthy habits and routines.

Dramatic, overnight results are not realistic, or even healthy. Remember that long-lasting results are what we're aiming for here, not an unsustainable quick-fix. However, if you remain dedicated, you will soon see the fruits of your labour. You will start to notice the physical and mental changes in yourself. You will feel happier and more energized.

You will likely also find that the lifestyle changes that were initially so challenging are now pretty easy to keep up with. Once your new healthy habits and routines are in place they become a driving force and will keep you going even when motivation is lacking. So keep going. Force yourself to stick to the routine no matter what, knowing that once you get through this initial challenge, you will begin to gain momentum towards your goal.

On the next few pages, I have included some motivational quotes. These have been added on whole single pages so that you can cut them out if you would like some “out of the box” motivation. If, on the other hand, you would prefer to make your own, all the better.

I understand how hard it can be to get motivated at times. Right now your motivation may be high, but there will be days ahead when you find it hard to get moving, I know this because I’ve been there myself. At times like these I have found motivational quotes to be invaluable. Motivational quotes, or positive affirmations, that resonate with you on a personal level can really make the difference on one of those days when you are feeling low.

They can help in times of physical tiredness or mental fatigue, and they may even prevent you from making bad food choices. Having these little messages on display in your everyday life will remind you of your goals and can rekindle that fire of motivation that brought you on this path in the first place.

I suggest cutting or copying these out and placing them where you will always see them, especially in the places you will be before your training. Of course, this is by no means a definitive list. Perhaps instead you might like to make your own motivational quotes. Writing them out now before you get started is key.

Be creative – what do you think you’ll want to hear when the going gets tough? I personally prefer messages with a more positive tone, rather than a hard, ‘tough love’ approach. Reading positive messages like this to yourself every day can really help to develop a more optimistic outlook; something which will benefit you in all areas of your life.

Get these motivational quotes pinned up before you start this routine so that they’re in place when you need them. Make it a priority.

Some good places to pin up motivational quotes are:

- By the side of your bed.
- On top of your television set.
- As you walk into your house, at eye level.
- On your fridge or pantry door.
- On your bathroom mirror.
- On your monitor at work or home.

Be inventive with these quotes. If you decide to make your own, you could add photographs or pictures to the quotes. The only rule to this is that whatever you create must resonate with you. You must believe it or it will have no power to motivate you when you are feeling down.

You may find that you only need these quotes for the duration of this six-week training plan. Once you have

built a solid routine you may find that you have fewer dips in motivation. However, you might find, like I have, that they continue to be useful even once you've hit your goal. You might simply want to change them up to fit your new goals. You might think this sounds too simple to be of any consequence, but don't underestimate the power of having these positive messages dotted around your life!



**THINK
ABOUT
WHY YOU
STARTED**





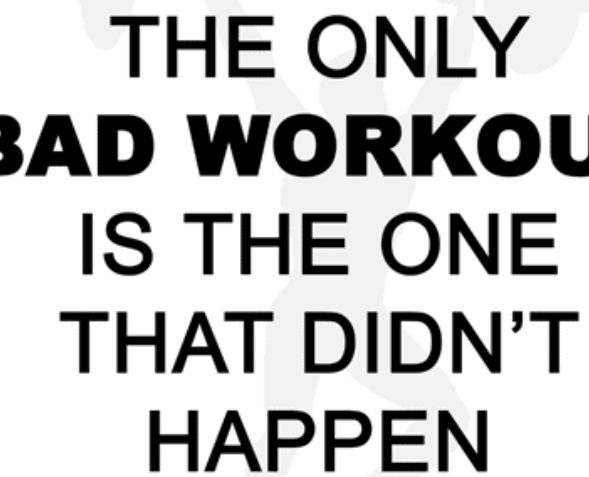
**YOU DON'T HAVE
TO BE GREAT
TO START**

**BUT YOU DO
HAVE TO START
TO BE GREAT**



THE #1 REASON PEOPLE
GIVE UP SO FAST IS THAT
THEY LOOK AT HOW FAR
THEY HAVE TO GO
INSTEAD OF LOOKING
AT HOW FAR THEY'VE
GONE ALREADY...

KEEP GOING

A faint, light gray silhouette of a person performing a barbell lift, possibly a deadlift or squat, with the barbell resting on their shoulders.

THE ONLY
BAD WORKOUT
IS THE ONE
THAT DIDN'T
HAPPEN



A faint, light gray silhouette of a person in a gym, performing a barbell lift. The person is standing with their feet apart, holding a barbell across their shoulders with their arms extended. The silhouette is centered behind the main text.

LIFE BEGINS
AT THE END
OF YOUR
COMFORT
ZONE

A faint, light gray silhouette of a person performing a barbell lift, such as a deadlift or squat, positioned behind the text.

**ONE HOUR OF
WORKOUT**

**IS 4% OF
YOUR DAY**

A faint, light gray silhouette of a person in a gym, performing a barbell lift. The person is standing with their feet shoulder-width apart, holding a barbell across their upper back with both hands. The silhouette is centered behind the text.

**DISCIPLINE
IS THE BRIDGE
BETWEEN
GOALS AND
ACCOMPLISHMENT**

A faint, light gray silhouette of a person in a squatting position, lifting a barbell across their shoulders. The silhouette is centered behind the text.

IF YOU WAIT
FOR PERFECT
CONDITIONS,
YOU WILL NEVER
GET STARTED

RESISTANCE TRAINING

Over the next six weeks, we will be doing two types of exercise: *Resistance* and *Cardiovascular*. Let's take a look at *resistance training* first.

Resistance training involves performing certain exercise movements against a force. This force could be in the form of barbells, dumbbells, bodyweight, or resistance bands, to name a few. For this training programme we will be mainly utilising bodyweight exercises and resistance bands of varying tensions. This will target specific muscle groups in order to improve their strength and function, and will build a solid foundation for your future training plans.

Resistance training is often underestimated, or worse still, completely overlooked by beginners. In fact, resistance training is great for burning extra calories so should form an integral part of any fitness and weight-loss program. For the purpose of this routine, you should complete any resistance training you have scheduled for the day before moving immediately on to your cardiovascular training session. In this way your resistance exercise will serve as a good warm up, also putting your body into its "fat burning zone" so you'll get the most value out of your cardio training, optimising the amount of fat burned per session.

During your first six-week training routine, you will be doing 3 - 6 resistance training sessions per week. There are a few factors that have to be considered when it comes to choosing your resistance bands or resistance level. You don't want to choose a resistance band, dumbbell or bodyweight exercise that is so tough that you can't do the movement in a controlled manner or are totally exhausted after each exercise. The point of this programme is to just get your muscles working, so we don't need a huge amount of resistance at this early stage. However, you do need to feel resistance and you need to be able to perform the exercise with reasonable comfort. I always say:

“It's not the size of the weight; it's how you lift it that counts.”

So if you have a resistance band kit similar to the one I have suggested in the *“What you will need”* chapter, you should find the resistance band that is good for you on that particular exercise. You will be able to progress through the different bands as time goes by. If the lightest resistance band in the kit is still too tough, this is not a problem. You can simply do the exercises without a band at all. If this is the case, great; you will have a lot of progression to work towards and look forward to achieving. Just remember that perfecting the exercise movement is more important than adding resistance to the exercise.

It is also important to note that, at first, your resistance training sessions may feel a little awkward as you get

used to the movements and find the right amount of resistance to work with. This is normal, since your muscles, including those that stabilise your body, are not used to the exercises. Don't worry, it's all part of the learning process and you will find your flow within a week or two. Just persevere and you will be surprised at how quickly you improve and these exercises start to feel smooth.

If this is your first time venturing into the world of resistance training, you may be unfamiliar with some of the terms and the format that the sessions are presented in.

Here are some terms to familiarise yourself with:

- **Reps (Repetitions)** – This is the number of times that you repeat the exercise movement within a set.
- **Sets** – This is the amount of times that you repeat a group of reps.

The main idea is that you perform several “reps” of a single exercise, have a short rest, then perform another “set” of the same exercise. Repeat until you have completed the suggested amount of sets for that exercise before moving onto the next. This is a fairly standard way of training with resistance movements and will lay a nice foundation for future training.

Here’s an example of how to use the sets and reps method for push-ups:

1. Assume the starting position for a push-up. Here is the starting position of the first variation of push-up - “Push-ups on knees –



2. Lower your body towards the floor as you inhale (should take approximately 2 seconds).



3. Upon reaching the top of the movement (when your face is closest to the floor), immediately return to the starting position as you exhale (should take approximately two seconds). This is one “rep”.
4. Repeat this process without stopping until you have achieved the target number of reps.
5. Once you have completed a full set of reps, rest for thirty seconds to a minute to allow your muscle group to recover before starting the next set of the same exercise.
6. Upon completion of the full amount of sets and reps for this exercise, take a thirty-second to one-minute “active rest” period before starting the next exercise.
7. During these “active rest” periods between sets, you should stand up, shake off, or gently stretch the muscle that has just been stimulated. This is why it is known as “active

rest”. Sitting down and relaxing will inhibit the flow of your session, making the workout less effective.

It is important to remember that each exercise targets a specific muscle group. By utilising sets and reps in this way, you will be sufficiently challenging the muscles; muscles which will play an active role in your body’s ability to burn calories!

CARDIO TRAINING

Cardiovascular and aerobic training are terms used interchangeably for any exercise that increases your breathing and heart rate for a sustained period of time. ‘Cardiovascular’ specifically refers to the heart, whereas ‘aerobic’ refers to oxygen. For the purposes of this plan I will refer to these types of exercises simply as ‘cardio’. Cardio is highly effective for burning calories and will, therefore, have an important place in any weight-loss program. By improving the fitness of your heart and lungs, cardio also increases your endurance.

Cardio includes activities such as running, cycling, swimming, and rowing, to name just a few. While it is a common entry exercise for many beginners to fitness, it can be easy to get it wrong. The most common mistake is trying to do too much too soon.

This can result in over-exertion, feeling sick, severe muscle soreness, or worse still, injury. I can empathise with this situation and attest to the damage it can have to your motivation and progress. If you find yourself here, please remember that it will pass and you should see it as a learning curve. Don’t let it put you off, you just need to re-assess, adjust and try again.

Running and jogging is a good fat-burning exercise and it's great for heart and lung fitness, but walking at a brisk pace can be equally effective. A brisk walk that follows a resistance training session is an amazing start for any beginner. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, performing a resistance session immediately before a cardio session will optimise fat-burning. The following example explains how:

- If you go for a thirty-minute walk without previously performing a resistance session, it will take your body around ten minutes to reach a fat burning state.
- This means that within a thirty-minute cardio session only twenty minutes will be spent burning fat.
- If you perform a thirty-minute cardio session five days of the week, you will be achieving 150 minutes, or 2 ½ hours, of fat burning per week.
- If you do your resistance training before your cardio session, your body will reach a fat-burning state earlier. This means that the second you start your cardio, you will already be burning fat. This effectively gives you an extra ten minutes of fat burning per session. That's an extra fifty minutes of fat burning per week!

There are many theories and ideas about the best way to burn fat, some of these are more challenging than others. The cardio methods in this book are based on my own experience and education. I have seen this work first hand and believe that it is the best start for any beginner.

When cardio training is combined with resistance training in this way, the beginner will have a solid start to their fitness journey.

The whole body is being worked and nothing is being neglected. All major muscle groups are being targeted and a good progression of cardio exercise is being employed to ensure that a strong all-round fitness foundation is being developed. Anyone with an unshakeable foundation of this nature will have the platform to build something amazing in the future.

Although I have designed this beginner's workout routine to focus on walking and jogging as a cardio choice, I realise that this may not be an option for some. If you are unable to walk or jog for whatever reason, don't worry, there are alternatives. It may help if you consider this:

“The fat burning level that you achieve as a result of cardio exercise is based on the consistent movement of your body, the rising of your body's core temperature and the time that you have spent working at this level”

When you look at fat-burning in this light, hopefully you can see that it can be applied to many forms of movement. For instance, if you have a bicycle, or even a stationary bike set up in your home, this would be a great alternative. Swimming is another fantastic cardio option.

You could even be really creative and use a punch bag routine or simply put on some music and dance. There are plenty of exercise to music options to choose from and who knows, one day you may be able to follow me, sporting a Lycra one-piece in my very own exercise to music DVD!...although there are no plans at the moment. Joking aside, if you are stuck for ideas, I would be more than happy to give you suggestions on how to modify the routine in this book to better suit your unique situation, so please feel free to contact me via my website and I will do my best to help you out.

Whatever you decide to do for cardio, it will work if you use the same principles that I have suggested for the walking and jogging method outlined in the routine. Almost every cardio activity can be adapted to fit in with this programme. Because low-impact cardio generally requires less time for recovery, you can do it every day. You should allow for no more than one or two days off per week for the 6-week programme, although these days off are not mandatory.

If you do choose to drop cardio sessions, I suggest that these are planned for the same day every week. This will keep you more organized, focused and serve to create a good routine.

We've talked about the benefits of cardio for fat-burning and the different methods of exercise that can be employed, but how should you approach each cardio session practically to get the most out of your training?

The first thing that you need to understand is that the longer your cardio session lasts, in other words, the longer your heart rate is elevated, the more value you will get when it comes to fat-loss. The next thing you need to understand is that to be able to sustain these sessions and to make them worthwhile, the pace or tempo needs to be comfortable for you for the entire session.

This is where I tell you that everyone is different and it may take a few sessions to find your stride. Just like

with the resistance exercises, it may feel a bit awkward at first. However, as you will soon see from the progressive exercise plan that follows, I have tried to eliminate the possibility of taking on too much, too soon, and have aimed to assist in a quick identification of your specific optimal training tempo.

As with resistance training, there are many different theories and methods. During this six-week training routine, the focus is on “steady state” with a sprinkle of “interval training”. Here are some definitions for you:

- **Steady state:** Maintaining a constant speed that does not vary. For fat burning, the speed is normally a constant brisk walk or jog.
- **Interval training:** A mix of high and low levels of intensity. An interval training session could consist of walking, jogging and short bursts of sprints.

So, look forward to the cardio training. Find some motivating music, or audio books to listen to. Perhaps get a free running app for your phone so you can track your distance and progress. You might be surprised at how much this can help you stay motivated and focused.

D.O.M.S & MUSCLE GROWTH

The day after, or even as soon as eight hours after your first training session, you may feel a degree of pain in your muscles. This condition is known as **Delayed Onset Muscle Soreness**, or “D.O.M.S”. Welcomed by many trainers, dreaded by others, one thing is for sure; if you are challenging your muscles with exercise, there is a high chance that you will experience D.O.M.S at some point.

Many people, particularly beginners mistake this pain for an injury or feel that they have done something wrong during their training session. Typically, however, this is not the case. Experiencing D.O.M.S is a natural part of training and exercise and learning how to differentiate this from a possible injury will become much easier as you progress through the programme.

The truth is that we don't know for certain what causes **Delayed Onset Muscle Soreness**. In previous years, it was widely believed that this post-workout muscle pain was something to do with lactic acid building up in the working muscle groups and was caused by a lack of stretching after the workout. This was the prevailing view when I was a beginner to fitness.

However, as our knowledge of health and fitness has grown, these ideas have evolved. The current

understanding is that the D.O.M.S. is a result of ‘micro tears’ to the muscle fibres. To keep this as jargon-free and non-scientific as possible I will demonstrate this updated theory of D.O.M.S by using a simplified example that gives the gist of the philosophy without turning this section into a science paper.

Let’s imagine that you decide to do a set of bodyweight squats. You perform the exercise with a slow and controlled movement concentrating on good range of motion and consciously targeting your quadriceps (upper, front leg muscles) throughout.

The next day, you can feel the tops of your legs aching every time you take a step or walk up a flight of stairs. They feel bruised and tender. This is a classic case of D.O.M.S. If you find yourself in this situation, this is an indication that you have performed the exercise correctly. During resistance training of this nature, the muscle suffers a small amount of damage in the form of “micro tears” in the muscle fibres. This may sound nasty but it is actually this damage that stimulates muscle growth and development.

It is believed to be these tears that cause the pain. Whenever you put a muscle through its full range of motion, you are essentially squashing it up and then stretching it out. Add some extra resistance to the movement (your bodyweight, a resistance band or a loaded barbell) and you are increasing its normal workload. It is believed that these “micro tears” occur on the extension of the muscle (when it is being

stretched out). During squats, the extension happens during your downward decent to the point where your upper legs are parallel to the floor, as demonstrated in the following picture:



A lot of people actually see D.O.M.S as a benchmark for a successful training session. However, it is important that you remember the following to make sure that you get the most value from your hard work:

- If you have D.O.M.S you have essentially damaged your muscles, in doing so, you have

created the catalyst for muscular development.

- Muscles need the right fuel in order to repair, so you should eat a high quality, protein rich meal immediately after training or have a quality post-workout drink that aids repair and recovery.
- Muscles need rest in order to recover, so you should aim to develop a good, consistent sleep pattern and be aware of your activity level. Activity level is a relative term, everyone is different, but for the purpose of this training guide, resistance training that targets **the same muscle group** should be done with at least one rest day between sessions. This will change as the workload and intensity increases.
- It is important to learn to identify D.O.M.S and be able to differentiate between this condition and a possible injury. If you injure yourself during training, you will generally feel pain immediately. D.O.M.S, however, will normally develop within 8 to 24 hours. If you do have pain in your joints or you are unsure about your pain, you should stop training and seek medical advice. Causing an injury is a lot worse than missing a few training sessions as you could be forced to stop training for an extended period of time. However, the gentle progression I've outline in this plan should safeguard against injury by making sure you don't do too much too soon.
- The more consistently that you train, the less intense the D.O.M.S situation will be, so if it

affects you more than you would like at first, take comfort in the fact that it will get easier the more you progress and the stronger you get. D.O.M.S however is likely to be a familiar part of your fitness progression and in time you may find that you even start to measure the effectiveness of the workout by the resultant D.O.M.S.

As this is a beginner's exercise course, you should not experience extreme cases of D.O.M.S., and if you follow the exercise descriptions as I have laid out here, this will safeguard against injury. However, if you do feel very uncomfortable performing a particular exercise because of pain, leave that exercise out and resume training when the pain subsides.

If the pain persists or you are unsure about it, please consult your doctor. Remember, we want to prevent injury by making your progression gradual, so be cautious.

DEALING WITH SETBACKS

Setbacks are a natural part of life, and, therefore, an inevitable part of any fitness and weight-loss venture. Understanding this and knowing what to do when you experience your own setbacks will help you stay positive when the time comes.

How you deal with setbacks and the effect they can have on your training can vary a great deal depending on the nature of the problem or interruption. Coming back to training from injury, for example, requires a different approach to resuming training following a short-term illness, such as the common cold.

For this reason, I've split this chapter into sections that deal with each of the most common kinds of setbacks, as listed below:

1. Illness
2. Injury
3. Interruptions
4. Time restrictions

Within each section I address the concerns and questions that I have come across most often. You may

find it helpful to read through all of these sections, as there are some overlapping themes.

Illness

How long should I take off from training?

Take total rest until you can resume everyday activities again without a problem. Your number one priority should be to focus on getting well. Resist the temptation to try and get back to your training too soon, as this could cause your illness to linger or even worsen. If it means that you have to spend a full week in bed to get over an illness, so be it. Stay well hydrated and eat good nutritious foods whenever possible.

Where should I pick up from?

This depends on how long you have to take off. If you have to take off between one and four weeks from your training, I recommend simply trying to pick up where you left off. It may be tempting to want to wipe the slate clean and start again from day one, but this is often unnecessary and in reality can seriously hamper your progress. Believe it or not, your body can cope pretty well with some interruptions to training, returning to its pre-illness level of fitness relatively quickly.

If you have to take off more than four weeks from your training, I would suggest, again, first trying to pick up

where you left off. If after a day or two this level seems too challenging, then try taking it back by one week in your plan. Again, you may find that it's not necessary to go back to day one. Think about it like this: setbacks are inevitable in all areas of life. If you had to go back to square one every time you met with some difficulty or interruption, you would never get anywhere!

How do I motivate myself to get back into training when I've been off for a while?

The mental challenge of returning to a routine after illness can be the hardest part for some people. If this is you, my advice to you is this:

Relax! Setbacks happen to everyone. You've already laid the groundwork so in effect the hardest part is already done. Most of the time, small setbacks such as a cold or vacation will not ruin all your progress. You'll retain some of your fitness and will find getting back into training easier than you might think. In cases where you do have to take a prolonged break from training, realize that even if you do lose some of your fitness or gain back some weight, this still does not put you back to square one. You have laid the foundation by starting on the plan and getting your body and brain used to new healthy habits, thus it'll be easier to pick it back up. It's never as hard as the first time you begin – and you've already done that!

Avoid the temptation to keep pushing back your re-start date. There's no need to be meticulous about it. Once you are well enough to be doing everyday things again you should try to resume training. There's no need to start on a Monday, or the first day of the month, or a new moon, just start as soon as your body feels well enough. You can even resume training with some minor residual cold symptoms – like a stuffy nose or the remains of a cough. Just try it. At worst, if you feel terrible and can't continue then stop and take another day.

Try again tomorrow. At best, you may find that any residual symptoms you had are alleviated and you feel better for having worked out. Take this first workout as a way of testing the waters. Even if you only manage a portion of the training session, this is still effective stimulation for your body and mind; getting muscles moving and blood flowing. It doesn't have to be a perfect session to be beneficial.

What if I find I can't continue where I left off?

As discussed above, use the first session back as a way of testing the waters. If you can't complete the whole session, don't worry; just do what you can. Tomorrow, move on to your next session regardless. Again, try this session - get as far as you can through it. If you have to stop early again, then do so. Continue on with your plan in this fashion. You'll soon find you are able to complete entire sessions again with ease and will be

ready to step it up a gear. This is a much more effective re-entry into training than going back to week one!

Injury

Injuries have to be treated a bit differently to illnesses. The first steps you should take if you suffer an injury are:

- Stop your training session
- Ice the area immediately to reduce swelling
- Elevate the injured limb
- Rest the injured limb
- Seek medical advice if the injury is obviously serious or if it shows no sign of improvement within a couple of days or if pain or swelling stays or returns

How do I approach training after an injury?

It is important to allow an injury time to rest and heal. Avoid any activity that will overuse or aggravate it until it feels better, this includes at home and work. However, if possible, keep doing other activities that don't use or hurt the injury site.

When you have fully recovered from your injury and are free of pain or swelling, you can begin to reintroduce yourself to the original training plan. The

key is to go slowly. Unlike with an illness where I would advise you to simply try carrying on where you left off, with an injury, you need to be particularly cautious when reintroducing any activity that involves the injured limb. Start initially with testing the range of motion of the injured limb. Move it through its full range of motion to reduce any tightness.

Many injuries can cause a reduction of range of motion and this can become a problem later if full range is not addressed in the rehabilitation period. Gradually, with each training session, try adding a little more intensity or resistance. For example, if you injured your foot, start back first with just walking.

Keep the sessions as short as you need to initially. Build up the distance gradually over the course of a few days. Once you can complete a normal walking session, try adding a short interval of jogging here and there. Keep these intervals short to start with and pay attention to your body for the rest of the day and the following day to see if there are any delayed reactions to the activity. It may be that you need more rest between walking/running sessions for now.

What else can I do to speed up my recovery?

Nutrition is particularly important to the recovery of any injury. This is the time to be fuelling your body with the most nutrient-rich foods that you can get: Vegetables, fruit, whole grains, nuts and legumes, lean

meats, and plenty of water will give your body what it needs to recover faster.

I am back to my week one level of fitness and ability now. This is so frustrating!

Recovering from an injury takes, above all, patience. You may experience feelings of self-pity, despair, and frustration. If you feel like this, take comfort in the fact that you are not alone. Even professional athletes suffer from injuries, experience the same feelings and go through the same basic recovery process. Try to focus on what you can do, rather than what you can't do. Sometimes this simple switch of focus can help you develop a much more positive attitude.

What if I can't do one of the activities in my training plan because of an injury?

As I mentioned above, focus on what you CAN do. If necessary, modify your workouts so that you can keep active in some way. If you can't run – try swimming or biking. If you can't do any sort of upper body work, focus on lower body and cardio. There's often a way to work around an injury so that you can stay fit.

Interruptions

Interruptions can be as simple as missing a couple of sessions, or they can be longer periods, like a vacation. Dealing with these kinds of setbacks is a normal part of training, so don't be hard on yourself when they happen to you.

Help! I've been on vacation and have gotten off track with my plan.

Returning to training from a vacation should be treated in much the same way as if you were returning from illness. My advice is the same in this respect so please read over that section too, but I'll briefly repeat the main points here.

Test the waters by trying to pick up where you left off. If you can only do a portion of the workout, that's fine. Leave it there and move on to tomorrow. If you need to take more rests during your workout, do so. Resist the temptation to revert back to day one of your plan. It probably won't be necessary.

If you try two or three days of picking it up where you left off and you are really struggling, then try taking it back just one week in your plan. Don't beat yourself up about having time off. Interruptions to training are inevitable, everyone goes through them, and they will not greatly hamper your overall progress if you keep a positive mind-set and jump right back into it.

Time restrictions

I don't have time for my workouts anymore. What can I do?

Sometimes in life our commitments change and we have to readjust our daily schedules to accommodate. Whatever the cause may be, finding yourself with new commitments can mean that you're no longer able to find the time for training.

There's no one-size-fits-all solution to this and besides, who am I to tell you how to organise your life? What I can tell you is this: It's a common problem, one I'm familiar with myself. My advice to you is to give yourself time to adjust to your new commitments. After a while you'll hopefully be able to see where you can squeeze in an hour of training each day. Perhaps you'll have to start getting up an hour earlier every day.

Maybe you'll wait until your baby is napping to squeeze in your workout. You may find that cycling to and from work allows you the opportunity for a decent cardio workout or perhaps you'll want to work out during your lunch break instead. Whatever your unique situation, if you can find some time each day that can be utilized for training, then you can work with that to build a great routine.

I don't have time to eat healthily anymore.

Sometimes with new commitments or time restrictions healthy eating may seem like too much effort. But if you rethink the idea of convenience foods, you'll see that natural, unprocessed foods, such as fruits, vegetables and nuts, are easy and quick to prepare. Maybe you don't have time to prepare elaborate meals at the moment, but you can still make sure that you stock your fridge, pantry and lunchbox with nutritious snacks.

Healthy meals can be quick and simple too and need not conform to the traditional ideas of what a 'dinner' should look like. Some evenings you might only have time to make a bowl of hot oatmeal with some fresh fruit and crushed almonds. That's great – it's a hundred times better for you than a microwaveable ready meal! Don't overcomplicate meal times. Think of them simply as opportunities to replenish and restore your body.

I will close this section by addressing a barrier that can often seem insurmountable and has the potential to ruin it all, yet is actually deceptively easy to break through. Upon returning from an illness, vacation, or injury, there may be a few fears and anxieties that cause you to put off that first workout; you may think that you will struggle with the training, you may feel weak, you may feel that all of your previous efforts have been wasted and you are back to square one.

These feelings are very familiar to me; I even have these feelings now when I have setbacks, and I know how hard this can be for a beginner. However, I have yet to have a negative experience upon returning to training. Once I have completed that first workout, the mental blocks are immediately lifted and I can never understand where they came from in the first place. The first training session always makes me feel positive, energised, and restores my hope and vision. Sometimes, it even feels like I have never been away!

Don't underestimate the power of a single workout, or a healthy meal, to give you a significant boost in motivation and self-esteem. If you feel that your progress has been ruined in any way, just hit that training session, eat your next healthy meal and you will be surprised at the results.

Please remember to revisit this chapter when you encounter a setback. It may be a game changer for you.

PREPARATION BEFORE YOU START

Before you start your six-week routine, it's a good idea to get yourself prepared. Correct preparation is generally overlooked but by taking the time now to plan and prepare, not only the practical aspects but your mind-set too, you will drastically improve your chances of success.

This book only scratches the surface of the planning side of things, so if you would like to go further down this rabbit hole of mind-set, planning and motivation, I have taken care of this in one of my other books – [“Fitness & Exercise Motivation”](#).

However you decide to handle your preparation, you should make sure to do at least the following:

- Pick your start date. It is important to have the start date in mind before you jump in. This will help you mentally prepare. Ensure that you have an uninterrupted 6-week period ahead of you before deciding on your start date. For example, you don't want to complete two weeks of the programme and then go on holiday for two weeks.

- Create your own motivational quotes or use the ones in this book and pin them up where you will always see them.
- Keep this book handy in your training area, grab the downloadable content if you are listening to the audio version or drop me an email and I will send you a free PDF of the workouts - (Jim@jimshealthandmuscle.com). Either way, make sure you have weeks one to six of your workouts pinned up somewhere so you can tick the boxes as you finish each workout. It's best to pin these up as if they were a calendar, so you only see one week at a time.
- Make sure you have all of the equipment that you'll need.
- Read through and familiarise yourself with the exercises. Practicing the movements beforehand will help the flow of the sessions at an early stage.
- Tell a friend or family member what you are doing and when you are starting. This should give you some extra support and you may even find a training partner to do the whole thing with. A bit of accountability goes a long way.

Make sure you have ticked off all of these before starting “Week 1”.

Week 1 – 6
Exercise Plan

WEEK 1

“LET’S GET STARTED”

Resistance

Resistance should be done 3 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

1. Seated resistance band chest press.
2 sets of 12 reps
2. Leg extensions with resistance band.
2 sets of 12 reps
3. Bicep curls with resistance band.
2 sets of 12 reps
4. Lateral raises with resistance band.
2 sets of 12 reps
5. Tricep kickbacks with resistance band.
2 sets of 12 reps

6. Crunches on floor, wrists to knees.

2 sets of 12 reps

7. Dorsal raises, hands on floor.

2 sets of 12 reps

Cardio

Cardio should be done at least 5 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

Just walk –

- Find a route that is a 1 mile circuit, preferably one that starts and ends from your home. Although you can use a shorter or longer distance, a 1 mile circuit is a good start for most as it offers enough challenge for results and is achievable.
- Pick a landmark on this route that you believe to be around halfway. This could be a lamppost, road sign, building, or even a dip in the path. The landmark should be a permanent fixture, as it will become an important reference point in your training.
- Get into the habit of walking this route every day. Don't worry about the time that this takes at first, but do make a note of how long this walk is taking you. This first week is aimed at creating

the habit as priority; any fitness benefits are a bonus.

- If you are opting for another form of cardio such as the stationary bike etc. You can use the same principals. For example - most stationary bikes these days have a digital display that you can probably set to “distance travelled”, set this to 1 mile and simply pedal. Whatever cardio exercise you decide to do, make sure that you do it every day as planned. Again, it’s not the amount of physical effort at this point that is important, it is the mental aspect of building the habit. If you have a specific cardio exercise that you would like to use that I have not mentioned and are struggling to adapt this, please give me a shout, I will be happy to share my ideas.

Week one is all about starting to build a strong foundation and helping with one of the most important factors in any fitness endeavour - forming a routine! There will be some physical bonuses although you may not see or feel these yet. Your body will start to function more efficiently as a result of your training; your metabolism will get to work, and you will start to burn more calories.

It is very important that you do this circuit every training day. It all starts here, so don’t find excuses, just hit the sessions without fail.

WEEK 2

“KEEP IT UP”

Resistance

Resistance should be done 3 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

- 1. Seated resistance band chest press.**
3 sets of 12 reps
- 2. Leg extensions with resistance band.**
3 sets of 12 reps
- 3. Bicep curls with resistance band.**
3 sets of 12 reps
- 4. Lateral raises with resistance band.**
3 sets of 12 reps
- 5. Tricep kickbacks with resistance band.**
3 sets of 12 reps
- 6. Crunches on floor, wrists to knees.**

3 sets of 12 reps

7. Dorsal raises, hands on floor.

3 sets of 12 reps

Cardio

Cardio should be done at least 5 out of 7 days per week.

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

Brisk walk around your route –

- Increase the pace of your walk without breaking into a jog or run. The pace should be faster than a normal walk but you should be able to maintain it for the duration of your cardio session. It may take a few sessions to find an ideal pace that you can comfortably maintain but this is all part of the process.
- The idea is to try to beat your quickest time from the previous week. You might be surprised at how much faster you can do this route.
- Try to beat your previous cardio session's time each day or at least match it. Don't worry if this isn't always achievable. Our main aim is to keep up a brisk walking pace all the way round, bettering your times is simply a good motivator.

WEEK 3

“GETTING INTO A ROUTINE”

Resistance

Resistance should be done 4 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

Note the addition of an extra resistance session to this week.

1. Push-ups on knees.
3 sets of 12 reps

2. Swiss ball squats.
3 sets of 12 reps

3. Bicep curls with resistance band.
3 sets of 12 reps

4. Shoulder press.
3 sets of 12 reps

5. Tricep dips, feet on floor.

3 sets of 12 reps

6. Crunches on floor, hands on sides of head.

3 sets of 12 reps

7. Dorsal raises, hands on sides of head.

3 sets of 12 reps

Cardio

Cardio should be done at least 5 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

A small but powerful tweak –

- By now, you will be familiar with your cardio route, you will be accustomed to seeing your chosen half-way landmark, and you should have a better understanding of your optimal pace. Don't worry if you are not quite there yet, it can take longer for some people to adjust.
- In week three, you will add a small tweak. When you reach your half-way point, you should up your pace for thirty seconds. Ideally, you should start to jog. Once the thirty seconds of elevated pace is done, you should return to your usual brisk walk for the remainder of your session.
- You may be thinking, "I have never jogged in my life!". This is a common response for many beginners to exercise but don't let this hold

you back. Thirty seconds is all you need to do right now, then you can return to your normal brisk walking pace.

- By including this short jog, you will be adding a host of benefits to your fitness and health. The spike to your heart rate will cause your body to respond; since you have increased the exertion on your body, it needs to work harder to recover and in doing so will burn more calories and boost your fat-burning potential significantly for the remainder of your cardio session.

WEEK 4

“CEMENTING THE ROUTINE”

Resistance

Resistance should be done 4 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

- 1. Push-ups on knees.**
3 sets of 15 reps

- 2. Swiss ball squats.**
3 sets of 15 reps

- 3. Bicep curls with resistance band.**
3 sets of 15 reps

- 4. Lateral raises with resistance band.**
3 sets of 15 reps

- 5. Tricep kickbacks with resistance band.**
3 sets of 15 reps

- 6. Crunches on floor, wrists to knees.**

3 sets of 15 reps

7. Dorsal raises, hands on side of head.

3 sets of 15 reps

Cardio

Cardio should be done at least 5 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

Interval training –

- Start your brisk walk as you usually would. When you have been walking for five minutes, throw in a new thirty-second jog.
- Once the thirty seconds of jogging is complete, continue at your usual brisk walking pace.
- As this is a progressive routine you should not forget about the tweak that was added in week three, so once you reach your half-way marker, it's time to start another thirty-second jog.
- Once you have completed your second thirty-second jog, you should complete the remainder of your route at your usual brisk walking pace.
- You may notice that the time you spend doing your cardio sessions is starting to become a lot

shorter but don't worry about this just yet. As you are adding short jogs (spikes in heart rate encouraging metabolic function) to your sessions, you will be training your body to become more efficient at fat burning.

WEEK 5

“WELL DONE! KEEP GOING”

Resistance

Resistance should be done 4 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

1. Full push-ups.
3 sets of 15-30 reps
2. Bodyweight squats.
3 sets of 12 reps
3. Bicep curls with resistance band.
3 sets of 12 reps
4. Shoulder press.
3 sets of 12 reps
5. Tricep dips, feet on floor.
3 sets of 12 reps
6. Swiss ball crunches.

3 sets of 12 reps

7. Bent over rows.

3 sets of 12 reps

Cardio

Cardio should be done at least 6 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

Note the addition of an extra cardio session to this week

Stepping it up –

- Start your brisk walk as usual. Continue this for five minutes and then break into a jog for thirty seconds.
- Once you finish your first thirty-second jog, continue at your usual brisk walking pace for one minute.
- When you have walked for one minute, break into another jog for thirty seconds.
- Continue this pattern until the end of your cardio training route.
- It may seem that this is a bit of a step up in progression from previous weeks but you will

also notice that training in this way significantly reduces the time that you spend on your cardio training.

WEEK 6
“CONGRATULATIONS!
FIRST SIX WEEKS OF FITNESS
DOWN”

Resistance

Resistance should be done 4 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

1. Full push-ups.
3 sets of 15-50 reps

2. Bodyweight squats.
3 sets of 25-50 reps

3. Bicep curls with resistance band.
3 sets of 25-50 reps

4. Shoulder press.
3 sets of 25-50 reps

5. Tricep dips, feet on floor.
3 sets of 25-50 reps

6. Swiss ball crunches.

3 sets of 25-50 reps

7. Bent over rows.

3 sets of 25-50 reps

Cardio

Cardio should be done at least 6 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

Another jump –

- Start your brisk walk as usual. Continue this for five minutes and then break into a jog for thirty seconds.
- Once you finish your first thirty-second jog, continue at your usual brisk walking pace for one minute.
- When you have walked for one minute, break into another jog for thirty seconds.
- Continue this pattern until the end of your cardio training route.
- Once you reach your usual finish point, you should repeat the whole thing so you are effectively doubling your distance.

- You have a choice at this point; You can either complete your second “lap” as you completed your first, by maintaining the pattern of thirty-second jogs followed by one minute of brisk walking. This choice will give you a cardio session covering a distance of two miles and using a full interval training method. The session will be good enough for a sustainable fitness plan for the long-term and you should see a good rate of fat burning as a result.
- Your second choice is also a viable one; you could choose to complete your second lap at a brisk walking pace with no extra jogging stints. This will lengthen the time that you are spending on your cardio session but still give you a good level of fat burning potential.
- At this point, you may notice that your cardio sessions are taking more or less the same amount of time as they were in week one, but look at how much extra value you are now getting and note at how much you have improved. This is life-changing stuff!

Although you have now reached the end of your first six-week training course, there is still room for improvement and you should always look to tweak things here, challenging yourself a little more as time goes on.

Perhaps the more important things about this six-week training routine, more important than the type of training you have been doing, are the development of habits, establishing a routine, and seeing a degree of results. These things really are the foundations of your fitness and weight-loss success. Once you have this in place, you may want to look into training for an event, such as a 5K, or you may want to ease off on the running and spend more time working with resistance methods such as circuit training, who knows, perhaps even bodybuilding! There's a whole world of fitness development options waiting for you.

WHAT DO YOU THINK SO FAR?

I am always eager to hear what you think of my exercise routines.

I would really appreciate it if you left a review and rating on the online retail store from which you made this purchase and tell others about your experience.

Please take a few moments to do this if you have enjoyed this book so far.

Thanks for the feedback! ☐

Exercise Descriptions

Seated Chest Press

Start Position



Top of Movement



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(SEATED CHEST PRESS)

Attach stirrups to each end of the band. Cross the band around a high back chair (See more info section).

Start position: Sit on the chair with the band attached ensuring that your back is straight, your feet are flat to the floor and you are looking straight in front of you. Hold the stirrups in each hand with palms facing the floor ensuring that your forearms are parallel to the floor. Your hands should be in line with your chest and you should feel a slight resistance from the band.

Movement: Keeping your forearms parallel to the floor, straighten your arms out in front of you and bring your hands to meet each other at the end of the movement so they touch when your arms are fully extended. You should also exhale as you do this.

Return to the start position whilst breathing in and you have completed one rep. You should feel this in your chest.

Leg Extensions

Start Position



Top of Movement



Description Of Exercise

(Leg extension)

Attach the ankle straps to both ends of the band (See more info section).

Starting Position: Sit on a chair or bench, Place one end of the resistance band either under your left foot or wrapped around the rear right chair leg.

Attach the ankle strap around your right ankle. If you do not have one of these you can make a loop in the band. Grasp sides of chair with your hands for support. Keep the toes on the foot of your working leg pointed up.

Movement: As you exhale, extend your right leg to the point just before you lock out, try to get your lower leg parallel to the floor. From this point, keeping your leg straight, lift your upper leg towards the ceiling.

Return to the start position by bending your knee whilst breathing in. This completes one rep. Finish your set and swap legs.

Bicep Curl

Start Position



Top of Movement



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE *(BICEP CURL)*

Attach stirrups to each end of the band.

Start position: Hold a stirrup in each hand, step forward with one foot securing the middle of the band under the rear foot. Keep your palms facing forward and allow your arms to fall naturally at your sides with elbows slightly bent, eyes looking straight and your back flat.

Movement: Whilst breathing out, bring your forearms up to as parallel with your upper arm as possible and squeezing your bicep.

You should not rotate your palms inwards. Your palms should be facing the front of your shoulder at the top of this movement (Maximum contraction). Breathe in as you return to the starting position.

This completes one rep. You should feel this in your biceps, the front of your upper arm.

Lateral Raises

Start Position



Top of Movement



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE *(LATERAL RAISES)*

Attach stirrups to each end of the band.

Start position: Hold a stirrup in each hand, step forward with one foot securing the middle of the band under the rear foot. Keep your palms facing inwards, your elbows slightly bent and locked, eyes looking straight and your back flat.

Movement: Whilst breathing out and keeping your elbows and wrists locked, bring your arms parallel or just above parallel to the floor. Breathe in on returning to the start position. This completes one rep. You should feel this in your shoulders.

Tricep Kickbacks

Start Position



Top of Movement



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE (*TRICEP KICKBACKS*)

Attach stirrups to each end of the band.

Start position: Place the exercise band on the floor and step on it around 12” from the stirrup attachment with your right foot, this will be your front foot. (This will vary from person to person. You are looking to have tension on the band at the starting position). Bring your left foot behind you to give yourself a good platform.

Keep your knees bent and your feet where they are.

Bend over to pick the stirrup up with your right hand. Stay bent over with a flat back and pull your upper arm to your side and keep your elbow in. You should by now feel the tension from the band. If you don't, bring your right foot closer to the stirrup.

Twist your palm so it is facing forwards.

Movement: Keeping your upper arm parallel with the floor and your palm facing forwards, whilst breathing out, move your lower arm towards the sky to the point just before it locks out. Then bring this back to the starting position as you breathe in, this completes one rep.

Once the set is done switch arms. Do the same thing again with your left foot leading.

Crunches Wrists to knees

Start Position



Top of Movement



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(CRUNCHES WRISTS TO KNEES)

Start position: Lay flat on your back and bring your knees up so that your feet are flat on the floor, about shoulder width apart. Place your hands on your thighs.

Movement: As you breathe out, slowly lift your upper body off the floor whilst sliding your palms towards your knees. You should aim to get your wrists to your knees. Once at the top of this movement, breathe in and lower your upper body back to the start position. This completes one rep.

Dorsal Raises Hands on Floor Start Position



Top of Movement



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE *(DORSAL RAISES HANDS ON FLOOR)*

Start position: Lay face down on the floor, pointing your toes so the tops of your feet are also in contact with the floor. Your forearms should be in contact with the floor and at right angles to your upper arm with palms facing down.

Movement: As you breathe out bring your upper body off the floor assisting slightly with your hands. Once at the top of the movement, lower your upper body in the same way whilst breathing in. This completes one rep. (It is important to remember that this is a small range of movement so don't strain yourself too much at the top of the movement.)

Push-ups On Knees

Start Position



Top of Movement



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(PUSH-UPS ON KNEES)

Start position: Get into a position on the floor on your hands and knees. Your

Hands should be about shoulder width apart and in line with your face.

Movement: Keep your back straight and lower your upper body towards the floor by bending your elbows and breathing in.

Once you're at the bottom of this movement, raise your upper body back to the starting position whilst breathing out. This completes one rep. If you can do more than 30 of these, move to full push ups.

Swiss Ball Squats

Start Position



Top of Movement



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(SWISS BALL SQUATS)

Start position: Stand with your back against a flat wall, then position the ball in between your back and the wall so it rests in your lower back.

Keep your feet hip-width apart, slightly in front of your shoulders.

Movement: As you breathe in, bend your knees until your quads (thighs) are parallel to the ground. (The exercise ball will roll and end up between your shoulder blades).

Then push back through your heels to the starting position whilst breathing out.

Ensure that you are always looking straight ahead or slightly up. This will help you keep good posture. This completes one rep.

Shoulder Press

Start Position



Top of Movement



**note; please skip this exercise or check with your doctor if you have a known heart condition.*

DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE *(SHOULDER PRESS)*

Attach stirrups to each end of the band.

Start position: Hold a stirrup in each hand, step forward with one foot securing the middle of the band under the rear foot. Keep your palms facing forward and in line with your chin. Your eyes should be looking straight and your back should be flat.

Movement: Whilst breathing out and maintaining your posture, push the stirrups above your head as high as you can bringing the two stirrups together to touch at the top of the movement. You should not let your elbows lock. As you breathe in, lower your arms back to the starting position. This completes one rep.

Tricep Dips Feet on Floor

Start Position



Top of Movement



Description Of Exercise

(Tricep dips feet on floor)

(For this exercise I would make sure the chair or bench is against a wall so it does not slip).

Start position: Sit with your back to a bench or chair and place your hands so that your fingers are pointing forward and taking your bodyweight.

You should now be in an elevated seated position with your feet flat on the floor.

Movement: As you breathe in, lower your body allowing your elbows to flare out naturally to the side as you lower your body towards the floor. You should lower yourself only to the point that you feel the stretch on your triceps (the back of your upper arms). Once at the bottom of the movement, raise your body back up to the starting position as you breathe out. This completes one rep.

Crunches Hands On Side Of Head

Start Position



Top of Movement



Description Of Exercise

(Crunches hands on side of head)

Start position: Lay flat on your back and bring your knees up so your feet are flat on the floor about shoulder width apart. Place the tips of your fingers on the sides of your head.

Movement: As you breathe out, slowly lift your shoulder blades off the floor until you feel your abdominal muscles tighten into a full crunch. Keep your lower back in contact with the floor.

Once at the top of this movement, breathe in and lower your upper body back to the start position. This completes one rep.

Full Push-ups

Start Position



Top of Movement



Description Of Exercise

(Full push-ups)

Start position: Get in to a position on the floor so that your hands are about shoulder width apart and in line with your mid/upper chest. You should keep your back flat and take the weight of your body. Make sure that you do not dip your head.

Movement: Keep your back straight and lower your upper body towards the floor by bending your elbows whilst breathing in. Once you are at the bottom of this movement, as you breathe out raise your upper body back to the starting position. This completes one rep.

Bodyweight Squats

Start Position



Top of Movement



Description Of Exercise

(Bodyweight squats)

Start position: Stand with your feet hip-width apart, toes slightly turned out and your arms across your chest. Focus on a point on a wall or in the distance that is eye-level or higher and look at this throughout the movement. This will help you keep your posture and maintain correct form.

Movement: Keeping your feet flat on the floor, as you breathe in, bend your knees until your quads (thighs) are parallel to the ground. Push back through your heels to the starting position, whilst breathing out. Ensure that you are always looking straight ahead or slightly up. This will help you keep good posture. This completes one rep.

Tricep Dips Heels On Floor

Start Position



Top of Movement



Description Of Exercise

(Tricep dips heels on floor)

(For this exercise I would make sure the chair or bench is against a wall so it does not slip)

Start position: Sit with your back to a bench or chair and place your hands so that your fingers are pointing forward and taking your body weight.

You should now be in an elevated seated position with your feet flat on the floor. Stay in this position but straighten your legs out in front of you so that your heels are on the floor and toes are pointed up.

Movement: As you breathe in, lower your body allowing your elbows to flare out naturally to the side as you lower your body towards the floor.

You should lower yourself only to the point that you feel the stretch on your triceps. (the back of your upper arms). Once at the bottom of the movement, push your body back up to the starting position with your arms, as you breathe out. This completes one rep.

Swiss Ball Crunches

Start Position



Top of Movement



Description Of Exercise

(Swiss ball crunches)

Start position: Sit on the swiss ball with your feet flat on the ground. Walk your feet forward so the swiss ball rolls up your back and you are in a lying position. The swiss ball should be in your mid to lower back and you should be looking up at the sky.

Place your finger tips on the side of your head.

DO NOT CLASP YOUR HANDS BEHIND YOUR HEAD.

Movement: Keeping your feet flat on the floor, you should lift your shoulder blades up, this will put immediate tension on your abdominals. You should breathe out as you do this.

Your lower back should not lose contact with the swiss ball and your eyes should be in line with the sky at a 45 degree angle. Once you reach the top of the movement, lower your shoulders to the starting position, whilst breathing in. This completes one rep.

Bent Over Rows

Start Position



Top of Movement



Description Of Exercise

(Bent over rows)

Attach the stirrups to both ends of the band, loop through the door attachment (See more info section).

Start position: Stand with your feet shoulder width apart, bend over so your upper body is just above parallel to the floor and your back is straight. Bend your knees just slightly. Take up the slack of the resistance band so that you have tension when your hands are in front of your body, as illustrated.

Keep your head up and look forward at all times.

Movement: As you breathe out, pull the bands in to your body, I always aim for my belly button “*When you row, stay low*”. Once at the top of the movement, return to the start position as you inhale. This completes one rep. Remember to keep your head up, chest out and back flat throughout the movement.

More Information

More info: Chest press

Position 1



Position 2



Description

- Attach the stirrups to both ends of the band
- Position 1 :Loop the band around the back of the chair
- Position 2: Cross the exercise band over at the back of the chair

More info: Leg extensions



Description

- Attach a stirrup to one end of the band and an ankle strap to the other.
- Position 1: Place the stirrup through the front chair leg.
- Position 2: Pass the exercise band around the opposite front leg and continue to wrap around the rear chair legs until the ankle strap meets the front stirrup.
- (Note that this example shows the set up for right leg training only)

More info: Bent over rows



Description

Attach the stirrups to both ends of the band, loop through the door attachment.

Before you start the exercise, ensure that you have even lengths of exercise band on each side of the door attachment.

This picture shows the door attachment that came with my exercise band kit. Different kits will have varying attachments.

When using these attachments, ensure that you are using a closed door that opens away from your working position. This will give extra stability.

Where Do You Go From Here?

Now that you have introduced a home workout routine into your life and hopefully established a good set of habits that will enable you to develop the body and weight goals of your dreams, you do not have to sit back on your laurels, you can step it up a gear and get your results even quicker!

I have written a follow up to this book that will push your fitness to the next level. This exercise routine can also be done from the comfort of your own home.

I have designed the next six week routine to run as a nice challenging progression to the routine outlined in this book by introducing a different method of training.

The next book in this series is called:

“Home workout circuit training”

The routines from “Home workout circuit training” use a fusion of cardio and resistance training to demonstrate a whole new way of utilizing some of the movements already learned in this book.

Training in this way can massively boost your muscle strength and tone, while also making a huge difference to your fat burning goals! Home Workout Circuit Training offers a smooth and fitting transition from the methods of training outlined in this book to a whole

new boost in fitness and weight-loss progression; it can be a lot of fun and circuit training also offers a huge amount of scope for personalization.

Having a solid physical training routine that offers progression in place is great if you are looking to achieve real fitness results, whether this be fat-loss or muscle toning, or general health and fitness. But the physical aspect of fitness training and progression is only part of the puzzle. If you are someone that has no problem sticking to a training routine, has the willpower to easily stick to a diet, and has the mental robustness to keep going when the hurdles keep stacking up, all you need to do is get out there and make it happen.

But what about the rest of us? Yes, the mental aspect of any kind of fitness, diet or lifestyle change can be more challenging than the physical and I believe that if the beginner decides to take up the challenge of a fitness or weight-loss venture and wants the best chance of success, that they should invest in the correct mental preparation as a priority.

I believe in this so much so that I have written a book based on these principals. “Fitness & Exercise Motivation” was inspired by some of emails I received from readers of this book. I absolutely loved writing this book as it allowed me to engage with readers. Hearing of their struggles and challenges made me realize that I had experienced much of the same and this prompted me to draw from aspects of my personal

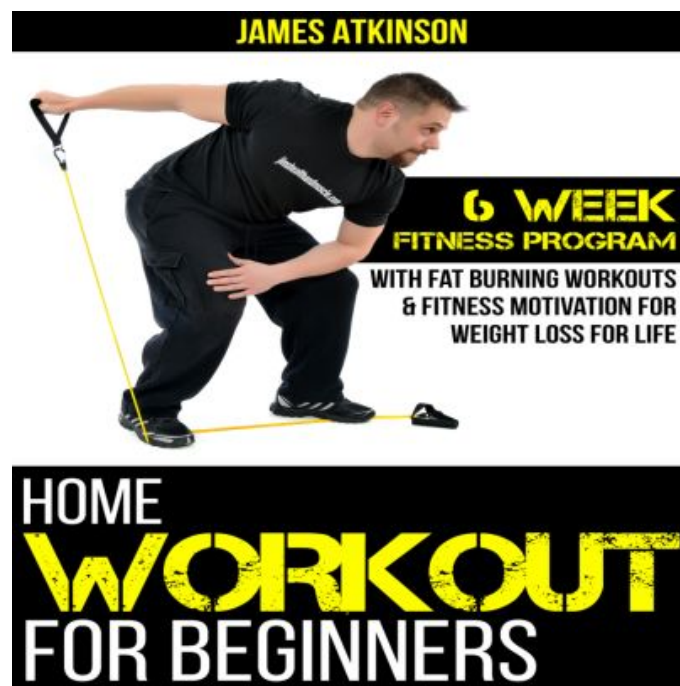
journey, thus creating a useful guide for the development of a winning mindset.

“Fitness & Exercise Motivation” has connected me with many interesting people and I have made some great new friends from this book, which both humbles me and makes me grateful. The book has been a best seller on the US Amazon store and continues to carry the “Bestseller” sticker on the UK store at the time of writing.

HOME WORKOUT FOR BEGINNERS

[Grab the audible version on the US store
HERE](#)

[Grab the audible version on the UK store
HERE](#)



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HOME WORKOUT CIRCUIT TRAINING



**6 WEEK EXERCISE BAND WORKOUT & BODYWEIGHT
TRAINING FOR FAT LOSS, STRENGTH AND MUSCLE TONE**

JAMES ATKINSON

BOOK #3 - HOME WORKOUT CIRCUIT
TRAINING

*6 WEEK EXERCISE BAND WORKOUT &
BODYWEIGHT TRAINING FOR FAT LOSS,
STRENGTH AND MUSCLE TONE*

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And Follow on Twitter

[@jimshm #homeworkout](https://twitter.com/jimshm)

PREFACE

Hi, I'm Jim, a qualified fitness coach who is very passionate about helping people to reach their fitness potential.

During my time in the "fitness arena" I've been a long distance runner, competing bodybuilder and served a number of years in the British army in an airborne unit (9 para sqn R.E)

You will find out a lot more about me if you visit my website:

jimshealthandmuscle.com

I'd like to thank you for your purchase and I know that you will get some great weight loss and fitness results if you take on-board and act on the information that you read.

This book will give you many of the tools that you need to turn your life around and become fitter, leaner and healthier.

I have put a great focus on fitness results for the long term in these pages and it is a "no brainer" to me that this approach is the best way to go with any fitness goal.

Before you start this fitness routine, please check out my author page as there may be other titles that will help you even more:

[James Atkinson \(author page\)](#)

Il let you get stuck into the book now but I would just like to let you know that if you have any questions or comments, I would be more than happy to help you as these subjects are a passion of mine and have been for many years.

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INTRODUCTION

If this is the first you have heard of me, great! I look forward to our training!

This book will no doubt put you on the path to achieving some great fitness and fat loss results. However, this is the second instalment of our fitness journey.

- If you are a total beginner I would advise that you start with the first book as it is a progressive fitness and fat loss workout routine specifically designed for the absolute beginner. The first book is called: [*“Home workout for beginners”*](#) and can be found by clicking the link or doing a quick search.
- If you would rather just get stuck into this six week workout routine, that’s no problem at all. I have designed the program to be “stand alone” as well as a progression from the previous routine. However, some of the exercises in this book are slightly more advanced and require some form of “base training” before they can be performed correctly.
- If you have already read and completed the first six weeks (home workout for beginners) book, congratulations on finishing your first 6 weeks! This is a big achievement and you will no doubt be seeing the rewards from your hard work.

It’s time to step it up a gear and earn even more fitness results!

MY MAILING LIST & FREE HEALTHY RECIPES

If you would like to be notified of any future promotions, new releases or special offers that I have on health, fitness, diet and lifestyle please sign up to my mailing list

I promote every book on its release at \$0.99 or even free of charge and I would like to offer these opportunities to my loyal readers.

Why would I do this? First off, it is a “thank you” from me for choosing to buy my book over all of the competition

And secondly because I am a self-published author and I hold all the cards when it comes to promotion as well as writing the actual book so the more hands that I can put my book into the better and why shouldn't my existing customers be amongst this group of people?

Don't worry I hate spam emails too and I get my fair share so I rarely send out emails, but when I do, it will be something worth your while.

Please follow the link below to grab your 7 free healthy and tasty recipes that I have created myself. This free gift will help you out even more with your health and fitness plans and it also serves as a big thank you from me for your support.

Simply click this link or copy it into your browser and let me know where to send them!

<https://jimshealthandmuscle.com/healthy-recipes-sign-up/>

HEALTH CHECK

Before you embark on any fitness routine please consult your Doctor.

- Do not exercise if you are unwell.
- Stop if you feel pain and if the pain does not subside then see your Doctor.
- Do not exercise if you have taken alcohol or had a large meal in the last few hours.
- If you are taking medication please check with your Doctor to make sure it is ok for you to exercise.
- If in doubt at all please check with your Doctor first, you may even want to take this routine and go through it with them. It may be helpful to ask for a blood pressure, cholesterol and weight check. You can then have these read again in a few months after exercise to see the benefit.

IMPORTANT! PLEASE READ...

I am very aware that you probably bought this book hoping that you would just simply follow a step by step fitness routine that would get you some great fitness results. And you will find exactly that here!

However, there is so much more involved in achieving your fitness goals that you have to consider if you truly wish to succeed.

From my experience in this industry and indeed many aspects of life itself, I have noticed that goals, whether they are fitness related or otherwise are often never planned out correctly and this lack of planning ultimately causes the ambition in the plan to quickly waiver and ultimately the plan fails.

This is why I have taken the time to add far more than just a workout plan to this book. If you are serious about getting fitness results, please read all of the pages leading up to the workout plan itself and make sure that you fully understand what you are about to embark on. The more you understand about the routine you are about to commit to before you start, the better.

Please study the layout, the motivation and mentality that you must adopt, take the time to practice the exercise movements and fully embrace the information that is at your disposal. There is so much more to fitness than just working out.

You may find some of the following sections and chapters fairly “information intensive” but I feel that it is all there for good reason. Nothing makes me more disappointed than seeing someone give up on their fitness or weight loss dream in the early stages of their new lifestyle choice. So please contact me if you are struggling or have any questions. I will be more than happy to help where I can.

WHAT'S THE PLAN?

Previously we utilised cardio exercise and resistance and used them as separate training entities.

Now this is a great start as you will not only be working towards your fitness goals but your body will be introduced to these different types of exercise.

Another benefit of this is that when your body is trained in a specific way, it will learn to become more efficient in the effect that you are after.

For example; if you jog for 45 minutes at a fat burning pace every day for a year in the hope to “burn fat”, your body will be extremely efficient at burning fat after the year is up compared to the first week of this fitness venture.

So now that we have introduced our bodies to basic cardio and resistance training, we are going to “fuse” the two types of training.

This “fusion” is going to be the focus of this book and training plan. This method of training is also known to some as “circuit training”!

WHAT IS CIRCUIT TRAINING

Briefly mentioned in the previous section, I like to think of circuit training as a fusion of cardio and resistance exercises.

Let's quickly jog our memories on the basics of each type of exercise. If you are familiar with this already, good stuff! But I feel that this does warrant a mention:

Resistance training: Is usually carried out as part of a routine that utilises weights or resistance bands of some kind in a “sets and reps” method.

For example: If you were to pick up a pair of dumbbells, set yourself up to do some bicep curls and curl these a number of times to target your biceps. The number of times you would curl these is the number of reps (repetitions) in a set.

For general fitness, this number is usually around 12 – 15. You would then have a short rest and perform another 12 – 15 reps. After doing this twice, you will have done 2 sets of 12 -15

You would typically put these dumbbell's down after each set and rest until the next set. The rest period between sets is normally around 30 seconds to one minute. But as the sets and reps of an exercise change from fitness routine to fitness routine, so does the rest time between sets.

Cardio training: Is mainly used to work the trainer's cardiovascular system (heart and lungs). Cardio training can be utilised in several different ways, it can be used in short bursts, longer slower sessions or a mixture of both.

Some methods of cardio training include, walking, jogging, running, swimming and cycling. These are all good methods for developing heart and lung function and also great for fat burning.

Circuit training is basically a big cardio session with resistance exercises thrown in...

Or it is a resistance session, but where you would normally rest between your sets, you will be stimulating your cardiovascular system (doing some form of cardio exercise for a short time).

I have designed this circuit training routine to be progressive so it won't be too hard right away, especially if this is a progression from the first instalment of this series for you. So please do not be put off by the thought of "no rest" between sets, it's not as bad as it sounds.... I promise ☐

WHY CIRCUIT TRAINING

There are many reasons to use circuit training as part of your fitness routine. If you are looking to burn fat, develop cardiovascular fitness and tone your muscles, in my opinion and personal experience, circuit training is one of the most effective ways to do this.

If you plan to earn a fit lean body from home using circuit training as your #1 method, you have made a wise choice! Here is why:

Increased intensity: Because of the nature of this training method, your body will burn far more calories in a more efficient way than it would if you were to train with resistance only and train with a cardio choice in a separate session.

That said; if you are a total beginner and very out of shape, you may find circuit training a bit too much of a challenge to start with.

Saves time: As circuit training is a “fusion” of cardio and resistance training, you will be saving a lot of time cramming the whole lot in to shorter, more intense sessions.

Added value: You can always add a huge amount of value in the form of fitness results to these training sessions by small tweaks to the circuits in your workouts. You don't need to worry about doing this right now as I have taken care of it for you in this book. But as you become more experienced in this type of training you will be able to adapt it yourself.

DO I STILL NEED TO DO CARDIO?

So, if you are fusing your cardio exercise with your resistance exercise, do you still need to do separate cardio sessions?

Your training sessions will have a 50/50 split of cardio and resistance type exercise. This means that you will be getting a good amount of “fat burning” from these sessions alone.

However, what I would suggest is that you also add a “stand alone” cardio session of some kind to your daily lifestyle. This can be something as simple as a brisk walk for 30 - 45 minutes.

Believe it or not, walking at a slightly elevated rate is in my opinion the most effective type of cardio exercise to burn fat. If you stay consistent, you will no doubt have some good fat loss results within a few short weeks.

If the main focus of your training is to lower your body fat percentage, these cardio sessions should be done at least 4 – 5 times per week and should become a solid part of your daily routine.

Another tip that I have found to accelerate fat loss further is to do these steady state walks before you eat anything, so first thing in the morning. There are a lot of people that will argue with me about this but from my personal experience; this little trick is very effective.

If you are a total beginner to cardiovascular training, you may want to start with a shorter training session than 45 minutes. But it is a good idea to aim for the 45 minute region.

Nothing kills motivation like a “too much too soon” scenario. So if you are just starting out, you may want to start with 20 minute cardio sessions on your first week and add 5 – 10 minutes each week thereafter until you reach 45 minutes.

If walking in the great outdoors is a problem for any reason, you could also use a stationary bike, treadmill or stepper if you

have the room at home. If you stick to a steady state type of pace on your “cardio weapon of choice” you will get similar results on either. The important point here is the intensity of your session.

To find the right pace for fat burning, you should increase your speed to the point that your breathing has increased but you can still comfortably hold a conversation. You should also start to sweat. Once you get to this point, you have found your steady state fat burning zone and you should continue at this pace throughout your cardio sessions. In time you will get used to this pace and it will become second nature to achieve.

To help you plan your cardio sessions, you can use a simple chart like this:

CARDIO SESSIONS

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

Fill in the time of cardio session that you plan to do in the blank space below the day that you plan to do it on. Then tick it off once you have completed this session. You can set up several months of progression if you wish.

If you are serious about fitness success, whether it be fat burning, muscle toning, running or bodybuilding, I cannot stress enough how important the planning aspect is.

If you have a solid plan that is written down, it will be easier for you to stick to, it will show you good progression and you will have something to aim for and work towards.

All of these factors will help with the mental game that is fitness and I will tell you that mental robustness plays a bigger part in the fitness/ weight loss arena than most people think.

SPLIT TRAINING

Split training is a great progression to all over body workouts and I personally like to plan my routines using this method.

All over body workouts are great! But if you start to train the same muscles with a high intensity, day after day, you will eventually burn yourself out and you run the risk of causing injury.

Although training hard consistently is a sure fire way to get the body that you want, you also need to make sure that you get enough rest between workouts.

Split training will really help you with this. The idea behind split training is that you train 50% of your muscle groups on your first training session of the week and then you train the other 50% of your muscle groups on your second training day of that week.

For example: On Monday's training session, you use exercises that target your chest, back triceps and hamstrings.

On Tuesday's training session you use exercises that target your biceps, shoulders quads and abs.

This way, the muscles that got worked out on your first training day this week will have an easier ride on your second training day.

In this six week circuit training routine, you will experience split training. This is a great way to progress through any training method, not just circuit training.

THE STRUCTURE

It is always good to familiarise yourself with the structure of any new training routine before you start. So here is an outline and some points to note about this six week progression.

In your first two weeks:

- Rather than using sets and reps per exercise, we are going to be using timed slots.
- We will be alternating between resistance exercises and cardio exercises
- Once you start the first exercise in the circuit, you do not rest until you have completed the last exercise.
- Once you have completed the last exercise, you rest for one minute only before starting the circuit again from the beginning.
- Your first two weeks will see you doing: Three training sessions per week with 3 circuits in each training session.
- These circuits will focus on cardio vascular development and target every muscle group in the body.
- Each circuit will be done three times in each session. So that's basically only nine sets per week..... Easy right? ☐
- On the second week, the time per exercise increases slightly. This is to ensure development but also keep the intensity curve comfortable.

From your third week onwards, you will be doing a split routine:

- We will still be using timed exercise slots and alternating between resistance and cardio exercises. And the structure will remain the same
- The training will increase to four training sessions per week, there will be “training session A” and

“training session B”. Each will be done twice per week alternately.

- “Training session A” targets 50% of the body’s muscle groups and training session B targets the other 50% of the body’s muscle groups.
- The training time slots will increase as the weeks go by
- The exercise choices will also become more difficult as the weeks go by.

This is the basic structure of the six week training routine. Understanding this progression will help you prepare mentally for each week’s progression and upgrades.

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THIS TRAINING

Now that you know the structure of the training and that you will be doing resistance and cardiovascular training as a fusion in this routine, there are some factors that you can change and some that have to be kept consistent throughout the circuit.

CARDIO

The cardio section of this workout is aimed at working your cardiovascular system (heart and lungs) and it is also responsible for fat burning. For the sake of this home workout exercise routine it would benefit you to have the outlook that: the more intense your cardio is for the short bursts that you will be doing, the more fitness benefits you will receive.

First let's look at the "tempo" of the cardio training that you will be doing before each resistance exercise in your circuit.

If you look at the training plan for week one, you will notice that the cardiovascular exercise of choice is "Step ups".

Step ups are performed like this:

Start position: Position an exercise step on the floor in front of you, or use an actual step, such as the first step on a flight of stairs. Or you can even use a sturdy exercise bench. (The higher the step, the more intensive the exercise)

Movement: Stand in front of your step of choice and place one foot onto the step followed by the other foot. Once standing on the step, place the first foot that stepped onto the step back onto the floor, then step off with your other foot to return to the starting position.

Make sure that you perform this exercise at a tempo that you are comfortable with but is still challenging for you. You should also keep this tempo consistent for the full time slot on your training plan.

At this point I really want to stress how important the tempo and consistency of your cardio exercise is. If you decide that you will do one single step up when it comes to your cardio slot, this will not benefit you at all.

It is also hugely detrimental to your fitness results if you “cruise” through, or just go through the motions of the exercise. If you only do as few step ups in your cardio slot between resistance exercises you won’t see any benefit.

On the flip side of the coin it is also important that you do not burn yourself out and sprint until you can’t breathe in these short cardio slots.

It may take you a few goes at the routine before you find your own personal tempo that is challenging but comfortable. Everyone who attempts a training routine like this is at a different fitness level and most people will start at a different tempo.

As the weeks go by, you will become fitter and you will be able to up the pace slightly. It is a good idea to be aware of this and always try and push yourself. You will no doubt get this wrong from time to time but it is always good to know where your limits are.

If you keep challenging yourself, you will be able to progress to a faster tempo, maybe even reach a sprint pace on these cardio sessions.

Probably the most important take away from the whole “finding your tempo” thing is that you should always challenge yourself because if you are not doing so, you will be short changing yourself when it comes to your fitness results.

These exercise sessions only last a set amount of time and this time frame is very short when it comes to fitness sessions. So whether you just cruise through or challenge yourself, it will take the same amount of time. You may as well make each sessions count!

RESISTANCE

When it comes to the resistance part of your training, you need to have a slightly different approach.

Keep in mind that the resistance exercises are in place to target specific muscle groups in order to tone and strengthen.

This is the part where I drone on about “correct form” or “execution” of the exercise. Yes I do mention this in most of my books and many of my blog posts, but I truly believe that this is a major factor in sustainable resistance training.

If you train with incorrect form, you will not only be increasing the chance of injury but you may even train your body to have incorrect posture or even limited range of movement. I have observed people that have done this to themselves and they are not aware of the damage that they have caused.

So please take the time to read the exercise descriptions and study the photographs in the later part of this book. Make it a priority to get this right before attempting a full workout. Practice each one before you start your circuit if necessary.

By making correct exercise form your priority, you will have less chance of injuring yourself during your exercise routine. And if you don't injure yourself, you can always train, so you will always be able to get more fitness results.

Ok, that's my emphasis on correct form out of the way and I am sorry if you are a regular reader and you feel like you are playing a broken record, but this stuff really is important.

In the cardio explanation, we looked at the tempo of the exercise. And put very basically: the faster the tempo or cardio speed that you can consistently keep up, the more benefit that you will get from these short burst cardio sessions. The main focus for the cardio part of the exercise routine is to raise your heart rate.

When it comes to the resistance part of your circuit training, you need to look at it a lot differently. Yes you should have a consistent pace but the exercise tempo should always be slow and controlled.

Each exercise is designed to target and exercise a specific muscle group. The way that the muscle is targeted is the extension and contraction.

For example: If you are performing bicep curls with an exercise band:

Start position: Hold a stirrup in each hand, step forward with one foot securing the middle of the band under the rear foot. Keep your palms facing forward and allow your arms to fall naturally at your sides with elbows slightly bent, eyes looking straight ahead and your back flat.

Movement: Whilst breathing out, bring your forearms up to as parallel with your upper arm as possible and squeezing your bicep.

You should not rotate your palms inwards, your palms should be facing the front of your shoulder at the top of this movement (Maximum contraction). Breathe in as you return to the starting position.

This completes one rep. You should feel this in your biceps, the front of your upper arm

Start/Finish Position Top Of Movement



Target muscle group is shown below:



As you can see from this example, you have a start position and a mid-position (Top of movement). Now the key to getting the resistance part right is the movement speed.

You DO NOT want to perform these exercises in short sharp bursts as you would with the cardio side of things.

You should perform these in a steady controlled manner with a count of 2 seconds from the start position to the mid position and another 2 seconds from the mid position back to the start position. This means that each repetition will take 4 seconds to complete.

Once that you have completed a single rep, there should be no break or rest and the next rep should be started immediately.

When performing each resistance exercise, you should aim to fill each allotted time slot for that exercise with a continuous movement of 2 seconds up and 2 seconds down.

AN EXCEPTION TO THE RULE

Later on in the routine, I have added some exercises that I believe can be classed as cardio or resistance. These exercises can also be classed as “Plyometric”.

I made the decision to add these kinds of exercises into the resistance slots for a few reasons. The main reason was that I believe these exercise choices to be great for full body muscular conditioning with the added bonus of fat burning.

These are towards the end of the routine so your body has a chance to work up to this kind of exertion if you are not used to it.

Each one of these exercises is marked with a “(P)” on the routine layout page so they are easy to spot. As some of these exercises can be high impact on your joints, you may want to switch them out with another resistance choice if you suffer from weakness in these areas.

When you see an exercise that is marked with the “(P)”, you should take the same approach to performing it as you would do to that of a “cardiovascular” exercise (short sharp bursts).

TO SUM THIS UP

If you are new to this, I will admit that there is a lot to take in here and if you have not yet read any of the exercise descriptions; it may not make much sense to you. If this is the case, I would advise that you skip forward and look through the layout of the routines and some of the exercise descriptions, then have another read through this section.

It is definitely worth understanding the difference between cardio and resistance training and the correct way to perform each type of training. If they are done correctly, you will get a whole lot more from your fitness sessions.

When performing your cardio training, you should:

- Train at a consistent rate throughout your allotted time frame for that exercise.
- If possible in short sharp bursts. This should in turn, raise your heart rate
- Always challenge yourself when it comes to the tempo of the exercise.

When performing your resistance exercises, you should:

- Make “Correct form” your priority
- Train with consistency throughout the allotted time frame with a 2 second up, 2 seconds down controlled tempo
- Target and understand the muscle group that you are working

You should also look out for the exercises marked with “(P)”. These are plyometric type exercises and can cause high impact on some joints in the body. If you feel any pain or have existing weak joints, you should choose another exercise to do instead. I would suggest a resistance exercise that targets your personal weak points.

It is also a good idea to learn how to perform each exercise in your routine for the week that you are about to start before you

jump into the training.

PROGRESSION

Although this is a six week training plan, it does not necessarily mean that it has to take you six weeks only.

I touched on this in the first book in this series briefly. The reason that I would like to put more emphasis on the progression factor in this book is because some of these workouts will be very challenging to a lot of readers.

With this in mind I would like to add a bit of perspective to this whole routine when looking at your own personal progress through this training.

It is very important to understand that everyone is different. Some people will find this routine easy, and fly through it while others will struggle on week one day one. If you are one of the guys or gals that finds week one easy, great! You can progress to week two in due course.

However, if you really struggle with week one and find it hard to finish the workouts, you should maybe repeat week one so you do two weeks' worth of week one. If you still struggle, just repeat again and so on.

This is a great way to progress with your fitness and keep earning your results. But be careful not to fall into the trap that is your "comfort zone". I have seen this hundreds of times in the gyms that I have worked and trained in. There are so many people that will join a gym and maybe go to that gym three or four days every week, year after year and do the same old routine at every session until instead of challenging their muscles and fitness levels they just end up going through the motions.

This kind of commitment is exactly what you need for fitness success but without progression and more challenges in your workouts, your fitness levels and body composition will not change one bit.

It may sound like I am contradicting myself after stating that you should repeat a week of this routine until you feel that you are ready to move on. This is not the case. It is perfectly fine to repeat a certain week as many times as is needed for you to be able to move on.

However, the more consecutive weeks that you repeat a training progression, the fitter and more able that you will be to progress to the next stage.

I would suggest that if you have repeated the week that you are struggling with three times, you should try the next weeks progression. If you are unable to complete these training sessions, go back to the previous week. You should then attempt to progress every other week until you are able to do the sessions that you struggled with.

This is real fitness progression and it is unfortunately why most people who attempt to lose weight/ get fit or even build muscle never actually reach their goals.

REST

It is always a good idea to plan for a rest week. This is a week where you take it easy with training. You may choose to just stay active and just do a walk or some light cardio every day or you may choose to have a total rest from exercise.

Either way this will do you good. It is great to train your body and progress with your fitness goals but it is also vital that you give your body the rest it needs to regenerate and recover. This is why I would always suggest that you have a weeks rest at regular intervals.

My advice here is to take a week out after every six weeks of consecutive training. Not only will this give you the rest that you need but it will also help with the mental side of working on a fitness routine.

FOOD

As you may be aware, food plays a very important part in creating your body composition and fuelling your body. With any lifestyle change I believe that if there are many changes going on at the same time, it may cause problems and promote failure to keep on top of these changes.

So as an exercise routine is quiet a large change to incorporate into your life I would advise that you just make yourself aware of the food that you are eating and make small changes here too for now. Remember that a lot of small changes over time will result in a big change in the end.

I will outline some of the ideal ways to cut out bad foods and add good food choices and habits in to your life:

- Cut back on, or cut out fizzy sugary drinks, this includes energy drinks, they are no good at all
- Cut back on chocolate, sweets and deserts. Maybe have one small treat per day
- Eat lean meat (chicken breast, lean beef and fish)
- Eat vegetables and nuts. If you snack a lot, snack on raw veggies such as carrot sticks, celery sticks and almonds instead of doughnuts, cookies and potato chips
- Start to add more whole grains, beans, fruits, and vegetables into your diet
- Cut down on your portion size at each meal

- Don't cut out your favorite cheat foods altogether. Instead, eat smaller portions of this or have this only once per week

So this is a list of things that you can work towards but I would suggest changing one thing at a time and not making all of these changes together. If you are very strong minded and believe that you can make all of these changes all at once and make them stick, great stuff! Do it.

MORE MOTIVATIONAL QUOTES

I am a strong believer in the power of motivational quotes and the part that they can play in a successful fitness undertaking.

If this is to be your first six weeks on your path to fitness and weight loss and you skipped my first book, I will bring you up to speed;

In the first instalment, we used a bunch of fitness motivational quotes as a tool for, yes, you guessed it: Staying motivated! □

The idea behind this type of motivation can be very powerful. What I suggest is that you print out or if you are reading the paper back version of this book, cut out these quotes and pin them up so they are visible in all aspects of your life.

For example, I use these myself and some of the places that I pin them up are:

- My bedside table so it is the first thing that I see when I wake up
- The inside of my front door. If I am struggling to go and train, there is something to spur me on here
- The bathroom mirror. This reminds me of my goal and I will see it at least twice every day
- Next to my TV. If I am putting off a training session because of the TV, I will be reminded

If you used the motivational quotes from my last book, you may want to change some of them.

If you have dotted these around your house, office or put them on your fridge, after a time, you will stop noticing them as much so you may become “de sensitised” to their effect.

This is a common thing. How many times have you been in a familiar place and noticed a picture hanging on the wall that you haven't seen in a while? It's been there all along, but you are so used to seeing it that it becomes invisible.

Although it may sound corny or silly to do this kind of thing, I do stand by it and can't emphasise enough how much it has helped me out in the past. So as silly as it may sound, it is well worth giving it a go!

These quotes are really a great tool for motivation and in some cases can be the deal breaker when you are feeling particularly negative or you are torn between doing your training or skipping the session.

Don't underestimate the power of this tool!

Here are your quotes to use. Please feel free to ditch these and use your own if they don't strike a chord with you, a quick google search will give you all that you need.

**EVERY TRAINING
SESSION COUNTS.
SO DON'T
MISS ONE!**

**IF YOU
NEVER GIVE UP,
YOU WON'T
BE BEATEN**

**NOTHING
THAT'S
WORTH HAVING
IS EVER EASY TO GET**

**IF YOU WANT IT BAD
ENOUGH
YOU WILL FIND
THE TIME**

**DON'T WISH FOR IT.
MAKE
IT
HAPPEN!**

**WHEN YOU HIT
YOUR GOALS
YOU WILL
INSPIRE OTHERS**

**YOUR ACTIONS WILL
MAKE YOU WHAT
YOU ARE**

**YOUR SUCCESS
DEPENDS
ON YOUR ACTIONS**

**HAVE YOU DONE
YOUR TRAINING
TODAY?**

**FINISH WHAT
YOU
STARTED!**

EQUIPMENT THAT YOU WILL NEED

It is best to have everything in place before you start this or any other exercise routine for that matter. This is why I suggest that you obtain all of your equipment first.

I know that many people will be pretty anxious to get started with their new routine but I always find that if you get everything in place before jumping right in, you will have a hugely increased chance of sticking to your new routine. After all, this is the #1 reason why people who attempt any fitness or diet plans end up never getting the results that they want.

“If you fail to plan, you plan to fail”

So, I would suggest that you set a date right now that will be the first day of your new routine. It's probably best to plan at least one week in advance. This way you will have time to buy any equipment that you may need, sort out your motivational quotes, and familiarise yourself with the exercises that you will be doing and the structure of the routine.

Here is a list of equipment that you will need:

- A set of exercise bands
- An exercise ball/ swiss ball
- An exercise bench/ sturdy chair
- An exercise step or a regular step (flight of stairs)
- A stop watch or phone app that can keep time

Here is a list of things that you should do before you start your routine:

- Plan a start date. You should give yourself at least one week to get mentally prepared. This will help more than you probably think so please follow this advice

- Print/ cut out or make your own motivational quotes and pin them up where you will see them on a regular basis. You should also identify places where you will have the temptation to skip a workout and get a quote or two pinned up here.
- Familiarise yourself with the exercises that you will be doing on the first week. Remember, the training sessions run at a constant pace and if you are pausing between exercises to read how to do a specific movement, you will be de-valuing the whole training system.
- Familiarise yourself and understand the structure of this training system. If you are unsure of any aspect of this, please drop me an email and I'll clear it up for you- Jim@JimsHealthAndMuscle.com

BEFORE WE START

This routine is designed with the whole body in mind. We will be working out every muscle group. Some muscle groups are bigger than others and need a bit more attention so these will be targeted accordingly.

I always feel that it is important to have a balance when it comes to any type of training so this was a major focus of mine when it came to designing this workout routine.

It is not essential that you understand which muscle groups need more stimulation/ intensity than others but it will always help you out a lot more if you do take the time to learn this type of thing. The more you know about your body, the better you will become at this whole game.

However, I would say that it is important that you know which exercises are working which muscle group. This is why I have included a pictorial explanation in each of the exercise descriptions. Please take the time to familiarise yourself with these before your first workout.

GET SET UP

Before each workout that you do, it is a good idea to know which exercises you will be doing.

The whole philosophy behind this plan is that you do not rest between exercises and you are working from the first rep of the first exercise until the last rep of the last set.

It is for this reason that you should familiarise yourself with your routine and set up any pieces of exercise equipment that you need for the workout that you are about to do beforehand.

For example on week one, day one, you need your exercise band set up for rows, bicep curls and shoulder press. So if you have the attachments attached to the band and ready to go, it will save you time if you need to set these up “mid workout”

Also for week one, you need your bench/ chair ready for tricep dips and your swiss ball ready for crunches.

It may sound simple to some but it may not have crossed other peoples mind that if you are forced to take these short breaks mid workout to set up or find a piece of exercise equipment because of poor planning, your heart rate will drop and your body temperature will cool down.

Ultimately, you will be sacrificing the fitness results that you should be getting.

Here is a check list for you to go through before you start. Once that you have taken action on, or you can answer yes to the points listed below, you are ready to start:

- Create your own motivational quotes or use the ones in this book and pin them up where you will always see them
- Cut out (or Keep this book handy in your training area) stages 1-6 of your workouts and pin them up somewhere so you can tick the boxes as you finish each workout. It's best to pin these up as if they were a calendar so you only see 1 week at a time. The week you are working on.
- Plan your start date. It is important to have the start date in mind before you just jump in. This will help you mentally prepare.
- Make sure you have all of the equipment that you need
- Read through the exercises and get yourself familiar with them
- Tell people what you are doing and when you are starting. This should give you some extra support and you may even find a training partner to do the whole thing with.
- Do you have an un-interrupted 6 weeks to complete the routine? (No holidays, or other reason to miss

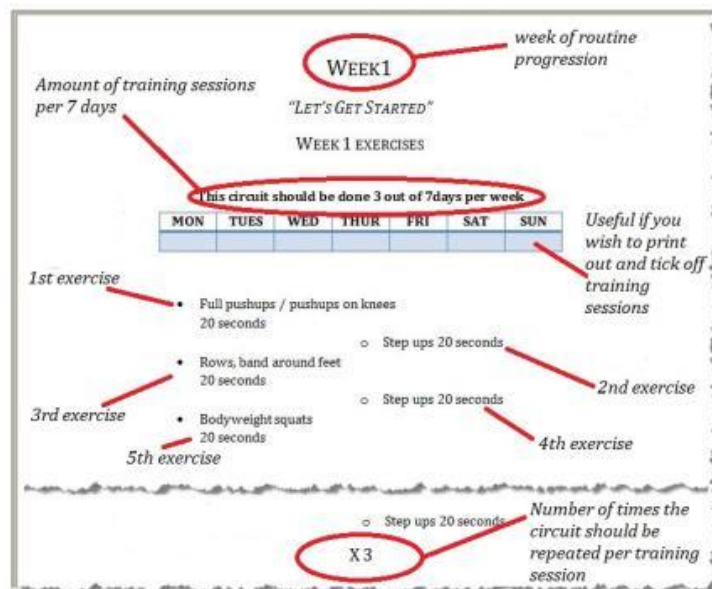
training sessions)

- Are you familiar with the structure of the routine?
- Are you familiar with the exercises that you will be doing on your first week? (you can take some time before each new week to do this)
- Do you have a stop watch/ phone app etc. set to count down each stage? (The first week should be set to 20 second countdown)

FINAL RECAP OF HOW THE EXERCISE PLANS WORK

Here is a sample of “week 1”. I have added some notes to the workout routine that you will see on your first week.

This will help to clear things up a bit further if you are still unsure:



If you are 100% clear on how you will be training, let's get started! Good luck! ☐

WEEK 1–6
EXERCISE PLAN

WEEK 1
“LET’S GET STARTED”
WEEK 1 EXERCISES

Training days: 3 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

- Full pushups / pushups on knees
20 seconds
- Step ups 20 seconds
- Rows, band around feet
20 seconds
- Step ups 20 seconds
- Bodyweight squats
20 seconds
- Step ups 20 seconds
- Bicep curls with exercise band
20 seconds
- Step ups 20 seconds
- Shoulder press
20 seconds
- Step ups 20 seconds
- Tricep dips feet on floor
20 seconds
- Step ups 20 seconds
- Swiss ball crunches
20 seconds

- Star jumps
20 seconds
- Step ups 20 seconds
- Step ups 20 seconds

X 3

WEEK 2

“KEEP IT UP!”

WEEK 2 EXERCISES

Training days: 3 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

- Full pushups
30 seconds
- Step ups 30 seconds
- Rows, band around feet
30 seconds
- Step ups 30 seconds
- Bodyweight squats
30 seconds
- Step ups 30 seconds
- Bicep curls with exercise band
30 seconds
- Step ups 30 seconds
- Shoulder press
30 seconds
- Step ups 30 seconds
- Tricep dips feet on floor
30 seconds
- Step ups 30 seconds
- Swiss ball crunches
30 seconds
- Step ups 30 seconds
- Star jumps

30 seconds

•

Step ups 30 seconds

X 3

WEEK 3

“GETTING INTO ROUTINE”

WORK OUT “A” EXERCISES

Train “A” routine 2 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

- Full pushups
30 seconds
- Step ups 40 seconds
- Floor cleans
30 seconds
- Step ups 40 seconds
- Rows band around feet
30 seconds
- Step ups 40 seconds
- Bench dips feet on floor
30 seconds
- Step ups 40 seconds
- Double tricep extensions
30 seconds
- Step ups 40 seconds
- Star jumps
- Step ups 40 seconds
- Swiss ball crunches
30 seconds
- Step ups 40 seconds

X 4

WORK OUT “B” EXERCISES

Train “B” routine 2 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

- Bicep curls
30 seconds
- Step ups 40 seconds
- Bodyweight squats
30 seconds
- Step ups 40 seconds
- Alternate squat thrusts
30 seconds
- Step ups 40 seconds
- Lateral raises
30 seconds
- Step ups 40 seconds
- Shoulder press
30 seconds
- Step ups 40 seconds
- Star jumps
- Step ups 40 seconds
- Calf raises
30 seconds
- Step ups 40 seconds

WEEK 4

“KEEP IT UP!”

WORK OUT “A” EXERCISES

Train “A” routine 2 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

- Full pushups
30 seconds
 - Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Floor cleans
30 seconds
 - Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Rows band around feet
30 seconds
 - Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Bench dips feet on floor
30 seconds
 - Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Double tricep extensions
30 seconds
 - Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds

Star jumps

- Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds

- Swiss ball crunches

30 seconds

- Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds

WORK OUT “B” EXERCISES

Train “B” routine 2 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

- Bicep curls

30 seconds

- Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds

- Bodyweight squats

30 seconds

- Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds

- Lateral raises

30 seconds

- Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds

- Shoulder press

30 seconds

- Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds

Star jumps

- Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds

- Calf raises

30 seconds

- Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds

WEEK 5

“WELL DONE! KEEP GOING!”

WORK OUT “A” EXERCISES

Train “A” routine 2 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

- Full pushups
40 seconds
 - Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Floor cleans
40 seconds
 - Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Crawling steps
40 seconds
 - Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Rows band around feet
40 seconds
 - Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Elevated bench dips
40 seconds
 - Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Double tricep extensions
40 seconds
 - Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Star jumps
40seconds
 - Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Swiss ball crunches

40 seconds

- Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds

WORK OUT “B” EXERCISES

Train “B” routine 2 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

- Bicep curls
40 seconds
 - Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Hammer curls
40 seconds
 - Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Bodyweight squats
40 seconds
 - Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Single leg lunges
40 seconds (each leg)
 - Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Lateral raises
40 seconds
 - Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Shoulder press
40 seconds
 - Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Upright rows
40 seconds
 - Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Squatting star jumps
40 seconds

- Calf raises
30 seconds
- Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Alternate squat thrusts 40 seconds

WEEK 6

“CONGRATULATIONS! 6 WEEK ‘S OF FITNESS DOWN”

WORK OUT “A” EXERCISES

Train “A” routine 2 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

- Elevated pushups
40 seconds
- Squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Floor cleans
40 seconds
- Squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Crawling steps
40 seconds
- Squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Rows band around feet
40 seconds
- Squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Dorsal hyper pulls
40 seconds
- Squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Elevated bench dips
40 seconds
- Squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Close grip pushups
40 seconds
- Squat thrusts 40 seconds

- Military bursts

40 seconds

-

Squat thrusts 40 seconds

- Swiss ball crunches

40 seconds

-

Squat thrusts 40 seconds

WORK OUT “B” EXERCISES

Train “B” routine 2 out of 7 days per week

MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN

- Bicep curls
40 seconds
- Squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Hammer curls
40 seconds
- Squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Bodyweight squats
40 seconds
- Squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Single leg lunges
40 seconds each leg
- Squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Lateral raises
40 seconds
- Squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Shoulder press
40 seconds
- Squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Military bursts
40 seconds
- Squat thrusts 40 seconds
- Calf raises
40 seconds

- Squat thrusts 40 seconds

WHAT DO YOU THINK SO FAR?

I am always eager to hear what you guys think of my work. I would really appreciate it if you left a review and rating, you can return to the kindle store and tell others about your experience. The kindle rankings are driven by readers and customers like you.

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EXERCISE DESCRIPTIONS

PUSHUPS ON KNEES
START POSITION



PUSHUPS ON KNEES

TOP OF MOVEMENT



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Pushups on knees)

Start position: Get to a position on the floor so you are on your hands and knees.

Your hands should be about shoulder width apart and in line with your face.

Movement: Keep your back straight and lower your upper body towards the floor by bending your elbows and breathing in.

Once you're at the bottom of this movement, whilst breathing out raise your upper body back to the starting position. This completes one rep. If you can do more than 30, move to full push ups

FULL PUSHUPS
START POSITION



FULL PUSHUPS
TOP OF MOVEMENT



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Full Pushups / Elevated pushups)

Start position: Get in to a position on the floor so your hands are about shoulder width apart and in line with your mid/upper chest. You should keep your back flat and take the weight of your body. Make sure that you do not dip your head.

Movement: Keep your back straight and lower your upper body towards the floor by bending your elbows whilst breathing in. Once you are at the bottom of this movement, as you breathe out raise your upper body back to the starting position. This completes one rep.

Note: For “**elevated pushups**” adopt the same start position but place your hands on a small exercise step. You should perform the exercise in the same way as regular pushups from this position.

ROWS

EXERCISE BAND AROUND FEET

START POSITION



ROWS

EXERCISE BAND AROUND FEET

TOP OF MOVEMENT



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Rows, exercise band around feet)

Select an exercise band that will allow you to perform at a challenging but consistent pace through the full allocated time of the exercise.

Start position: Sit on the floor with your legs extended out in front of you. Keep your feet together and wrap your exercise band (no attachments) around them. You should ensure that you have equal lengths of exercise band either side of you.

Take hold of the free ends of the exercise band so it is taught. Note that the closer to your feet that you grip the band, the higher the resistance will be. The more that you do this exercise, the easier it will be to know where to grip for your workload.

Whilst in this sitting position and throughout this exercise, you should keep your back straight and keep looking forward.

Movement: Keeping your back straight and torso static, you should pull your fists in to your navel whilst breathing out. During this movement, you should also feel your elbows brush past your lower/ mid torso.

At the top of the movement, you can push your chest forward to gain maximum contraction.

Once at the top of the movement, you should breathe in whilst returning to the start position. This completes one rep.

BODYWEIGHT SQUATS

START POSITION



BODYWEIGHT SQUATS

TOP OF MOVEMENT



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Bodyweight squats)

Start position: Stand with your feet hip-width apart, toes slightly turned out and your arms across your chest. Focus on a point on a wall or in the distances that is eye level or higher and look at this throughout the movement. This will help you keep your posture and maintain correct form.

Movement: Keeping your feet flat on the floor, as you breathe in, bend your knees until your quads (Upper legs) are parallel to the ground. Push back through your heels to return to the starting position whilst breathing out. Ensure that you are always looking straight ahead or slightly up. This will help you keep good posture. This completes one rep.

BICEP CURLS

START POSITION



BICEP CURLS

TOP OF MOVEMENT



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Bicep curls)

Attach stirrups to each end of the band.

Start position: Hold a stirrup in each hand, step forward with one foot securing the middle of the band under the rear foot. Keep your palms facing forward and allow your arms to fall naturally at your sides with elbows slightly bent, eyes looking straight and your back flat.

Movement: Whilst breathing out, bring your forearms up to as parallel with your upper arm as possible and squeezing your bicep.

You should not rotate your palms inwards, your palms should be facing the front of your shoulder at the top of this movement (Maximum contraction). Breathe in when returning to the starting position.

This completes one rep. You should feel this in your biceps, the front of your upper arm

SHOULDER PRESS

START POSITION



SHOULDER PRESS
TOP OF MOVEMENT



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Shoulder press)

Attach stirrups to each end of the band

Start position: Hold a stirrup in each hand, step forward with one foot securing the middle of the band under the rear foot. Keep your palms facing forward and in line with your chin. Your eyes should be looking straight and your back should be flat.

Movement: Whilst breathing out and maintaining your posture, push the stirrups above your head as high as you can, bringing the two stirrups together to touch at the top of the movement. You should not let your elbows lock. As you breathe in, lower your arms back to the starting position. This completes one rep.

**note; please skip this exercise or check with your doctor if you have a known heart condition.*

TRICEP DIPS FEET ON FLOOR

START POSITION



TRICEP DIPS FEET ON FLOOR

TOP OF MOVEMENT



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Tricep dips feet on floor)

Start position: Sit with your back to a bench or chair and place your hands so that your fingers are pointing forward and taking your bodyweight.

You should now be in a seated position with your feet flat on the floor.

Movement: As you breathe in, lower your body allowing your elbows to flare out naturally to the side as you. You should lower yourself only to the point that you feel the stretch on your triceps (Upper rear arms). Once at the bottom of the movement, raise your body back up to the starting position as you breathe out. This completes one rep.

SWISS BALL CRUNCHES

START POSITION



SWISS BALL CRUNCHES

TOP OF MOVEMENT



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Swiss ball crunches)

Start position: Sit on the swiss ball with your feet flat on the ground. Walk your feet forward so the swiss ball rolls up your back and you are in a lying position. The swiss ball should be in your mid to lower back and you should be looking up at the sky.

Place your finger tips on the side of your head.

DO NOT CLASP YOUR HANDS BEHIND YOUR HEAD

Movement: Keeping your feet flat on the floor, you should lift your shoulder blades up, this will put immediate tension on your abdominals. You should breathe out as you do this.

Your lower back should not lose contact with the swiss ball and your eyes should be in line with the sky at a 45 degree angle. Once you reach the top of the movement, lower your shoulders to the starting position as you breathe in. This completes one rep.

STAR JUMPS (P)

STAGE 1



STAR JUMPS (P)

STAGE 2



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Star jumps)

Note: This is a “dynamic” or “Plyometric exercise” which means that it will be done at a fairly fast pace and can be quite intense. So please keep this in mind on performance.

Start position: Stand up straight with your feet and knees together. Your hands and arms should be in contact with your body

Movement: As you exhale, Jump into the air raising your arms so they reach at least parallel to the floor whilst simultaneously moving your feet in the same direction.

On landing, your feet and knees should be in the start position along with your hands and arms.

FLOOR CLEANS
START POSITION



FLOOR CLEANS
TOP OF MOVEMENT



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Floor cleans)

Start position: Place your towel on to a smooth surface floor (carpet is not recommended). Make sure that it is laid out evenly and to its full length. This will act as a kind of safety feature.

Adopt the push up position with your hands on the towel and slightly pull the towel taught by sliding your hands outwards.

Movement: As you breathe out, slide your hands inwards to meet each other. This will bunch up the towel, but your index fingers or thumbs should meet at the mid line of your upper torso in front of you.

Once at the top of this movement, you should inhale and return to the start position. If you got the start position right, the towel will stop you from over correcting when moving back to the start position.

PULLOVERS

START POSITION



PULLOVERS

TOP OF MOVEMENT



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Pullovers)

Thread the door attachment through your exercise band of choice and attach the stirrups to each end of this band. Secure the door attachment at the top of a closed door ensuring that the stirrups hang down with equal lengths either side.

Start position: Take hold of the stirrups with your palms facing forward and kneel down so your head is at about a 45 degree angle from the top of the door. Your arms should be above your head and the exercise band should be taught. (If the exercise band is slack, try shuffling forward). Your back should be flat and you should keep looking forward.

Movement: Keeping your elbows slightly bent and locked in this position, as you exhale bring your palms down until they are in line with your upper thighs. Once at the top of this movement, you should push your chest forward to achieve maximum contraction in your back muscles (Latissimus Dorsi)

On returning to the top of the movement you should inhale and keep your back flat at all times.

LATERAL RAISES
START POSITION



LATERAL RAISES
TOP OF MOVEMENT



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Lateral raises)

Attach stirrups to each end of the band.

Start position: Hold a stirrup in each hand, step forward with one foot securing the middle of the band under the rear foot. Keep your palms facing inwards, your elbows slightly bent and locked, eyes looking straight and your back flat.

Movement: Whilst breathing out and keeping your elbows and wrists locked bring your arms parallel or just above parallel to the floor. Breathe in on returning to the start position. This completes one rep. You should feel this in your shoulders.

CALF RAISES

START POSITION



CALF RAISES

TOP OF MOVEMENT



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Calf raises)

This exercise can be done by standing directly on the floor or ideally on a regular step or exercise step for maximum range of movement.

Start position: Stand on a small step so the balls of your feet are on the edge and your heels are overhanging the step. Let your heels drop down so you feel the stretch on your rear lower leg (calf muscles) ensuring that your heels do not touch the floor. Keep your back straight and look forward.

I would advise that you use a chair or wall to steady yourself. It is important that you do not use this support to bear weight, it is just there to keep you steady.

Movement: As you exhale, raise your heels so your bodyweight moves on to the balls of your feet and your toes. You should try to reach your full range of movement so you achieve maximum contraction at the top of this movement.

Once at maximum contraction, as you inhale, you should lower your heels again to the starting position ensuring that you feel the stretch on your calf muscle again. It is a common mistake to not utilize full range of movement on this exercise.

SQUATTING STAR JUMPS (P)

STAGE 1



SQUATTING STAR JUMPS (P)

STAGE 2



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(squatting star jumps)

Note: This is a “dynamic” or “Plyometric exercise” which means that it will be done at a fairly fast pace and can be quite intense. So please keep this in mind on performance.

Start position: Squat down so that your feet are flat on the floor, your hands should be in front of you, your back should be flat and you should keep your head straight so that you are looking forward at all times.

Movement: As you exhale, in one explosive movement, you should transverse from this squatting through a standing position into a star jump (See “Star jump” exercise description)

Immediately after you touch down, assume the squatting position again and repeat the movement.

This exercise should flow and you should be constantly moving throughout your exercise time slot.

ALTERNATE SQUAT THRUSTS (P)

STAGE 1



ALTERNATE SQUAT THRUSTS (P)

STAGE 2



ALTERNATE SQUAT THRUSTS (P)

STAGE 3



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Alternate squat thrusts)

Note: This is a “dynamic” or “Plyometric exercise” which means that it will be done at a fairly fast pace and can be quite intense. So please keep this in mind on performance.

Start position: Get in to a position on the floor so your hands are about shoulder width apart and in line with your mid/upper chest. You should keep your back flat and take the weight of your body. Make sure that you do not dip your head. This is the same starting position as pushups.

Movement: Whilst keeping a regular breathing pattern, you should “Shoot” one of your legs up towards your chest while the other stays extended. Almost immediately after the toes of the moving leg hit the floor, in one motion, you should “Shoot” it back to the starting position whilst simultaneously “shooting” the other leg towards your chest.

This exercise should flow and you should be constantly moving throughout your exercise time slot.

CRAWLING STEPS (P)

STAGE 1



CRAWLING STEPS (P)

STAGE 2



CRAWLING STEPS (P)

STAGE 3



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Crawling steps)

Start position: Place an exercise step on the ground. You may want to butt this up against a wall or other solid object as it may shift whilst you are performing the exercise.

In front of this step, get in to a position on the floor so your hands are about shoulder width apart and in line with your mid/ upper chest. You should keep your back flat and take the weight of your body. Make sure that you do not dip your head. This is the same starting position as pushups.

Movement: From the start position, place one hand onto the step and as soon as you have taken your body weight with this hand, immediately follow with your other hand. As soon as you have both hands on the step, place your first hand back onto the floor. Immediately follow with your second hand. As soon as you have both hands on the floor, you should start the process again.

It is important to maintain a steady consistent breathing pattern when doing performing this exercise.

This exercise should flow and you should be constantly moving throughout your exercise time slot.

ELEVATED BENCH DIPS

START POSITION



ELEVATED BENCH DIPS

TOP OF MOVEMENT



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Elevated bench dips)

Start position: Sit with your back to a bench or chair and place your hands so that your fingers are pointing forward and taking your bodyweight.

Position another chair, swiss ball or even a step under your feet and take the weight of your body with your arms. Ensure that your elbows are not locked out.

Movement: As you breathe in, lower your body allowing your elbows to flare out naturally to the side. You should lower yourself only to the point that you feel the stretch on your triceps (Upper rear arms). Ideally this should be the point that your upper arm is parallel to the floor. Once at the bottom of the movement, raise your body back up to the starting position as you breathe out. This completes one rep.

DOUBLE TRICEP EXTENSIONS

START POSITION



DOUBLE TRICEP EXTENSIONS

TOP OF MOVEMENT



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Double tricep extensions)

Select an exercise band that will challenge you through your working set but do not use any attachments

Start position: Place the exercise band on the floor so that it is laid out straight. Stand on the band with both feet so that you leave an equal amount of exercise band either side of you.

Pick up the two ends of the band with each respective hand. Lean forward keeping your back flat and head up and knees slightly bent. Your elbows should be drawn in close to your body and pointing up so that your upper arm is parallel to the ground.

At this point you may have too much slack on your exercise band so if this happens, you should take up a grip of the band closer to your feet. The more tension on the band that you have at the start, the more challenging the exercise will be.

Movement: As you exhale, you should bring your lower arms up to as parallel to the ground as you can get them but you should not lock your elbows. It is important that your palms are facing in towards your body throughout this movement and that your upper arm does not drop below parallel with the floor.

Once at the top of this movement you should lower your arms to the start position as you inhale. This completes one rep.

DORSAL RAISES

START POSITION



DORSAL RAISES
TOP OF MOVEMENT



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Dorsal raises)

Start position: Lay face down on the floor pointing your toes so the tops of your feet are also in contact with the floor. You should then place the tips of your fingers on your temples with your palms facing down and elbows out to your sides. You should keep a flat back and your head and neck should keep this alignment.

Movement: As you breathe out bring your upper body off the floor. You should feel your lower back working. If you would like to increase contraction of these muscles, you could also raise your feet slightly simultaneously.

Once at the top of the movement, lower your upper body back to the start position whilst breathing in. This completes one rep. (It is important to remember that this is a small range of movement so don't strain yourself too much at the top of the movement.)

HAMMER CURLS

START POSITION



HAMMER CURLS

START POSITION



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Hammer curls)

Select an exercise band that will challenge you through your working set but do not use any attachments

Start position: Hold one end of the exercise band in each hand, step forward with one foot securing the middle of the band under the rear foot. Make your hands into a fist and turn your palms so that they face inwards. You may need to adjust your grip on the band (The lower the grip on the band, the more challenging the exercise will be).

Allow your arms to fall naturally at your sides with your elbows slightly bent, eyes looking straight and your back flat.

Movement: As you exhale, bring your forearms up to as parallel with your upper arm as possible and squeezing your bicep.

Your palms should remain turned inwards for the duration of this exercise. Once you are at the top of the movement, inhale as you return to the starting position.

This completes one rep. You should feel this in your biceps, the front of your upper arm

SINGLE LEG LUNGES

START POSITION



SINGLE LEG LUNGES

TOP OF MOVEMENT



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Single leg lunges)

This is a single leg exercise so when you reach this in your circuit training routine, you should perform this exercise for the allocated time on each leg before moving on to the dynamic exercise between exercises.

Start position: From a standing position with your feet together you should take a large step forward with one leg. You should step forward to a point that when you lunge down, your leading upper leg forms a right angle with your leading lower leg.

Once you have established this distance, you should stand up keeping your feet planted in this position. Your toes on both feet should be pointing forward and your legs should not move laterally from your hip joint. Because you will have a narrow stance, you should counter balance with your arms if needed. This may be hard at first, but even balancing in this position is developing stabilizer muscles in your body.

Movement: From this standing position, keep your back flat, feet planted in the tested position and head looking directly forward. As you inhale, lower yourself down by lunging until your knee is just about to touch the floor, but do not let your knee rest on the ground. Once at the top of this movement return to the start position as you exhale ensuring your feet do not shift.

When you have completed your allocated time slot on this leg, immediately switch legs and repeat for the second leg before moving on to the cardio/ dynamic exercise phase.

SQUAT THRUSTS (P)

STAGE 1



SQUAT THRUSTS (P)

STAGE 2



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Squat thrusts)

Note: This is a “dynamic” or “Plyometric exercise” which means that it will be done at a fairly fast pace and can be quite intense. So please keep this in mind on performance.

Start position: Get in to a position on the floor so your hands are about shoulder width apart and in line with your mid/upper chest. You should keep your back flat and take the weight of your body. Make sure that you do not dip your head. This is the same starting position as pushups.

Movement: Whilst keeping a regular breathing pattern, you should “Shoot” both of your legs simultaneously up so your knees move towards your chest. Your hands should stay planted on the floor and you should not dip your head. Once you are at the top of the movement, you should immediately move back to the start position

This exercise should flow and you should be constantly moving throughout your exercise time slot.

FRISBEE WALK AWAYS

START POSITION



FRISBEE WALK AWAYS

TOP OF MOVEMENT



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Frisbee walk aways)

Note: This is a fairly hard exercise that many people may struggle to perform. If you are unable to complete full reps of this exercise, you should only extend your reach to a comfortable position.

Start position: Place a towel on a smooth floor and adopt the pushup position. From here bring your hands in so that your thumbs touch. Your hands should now be directly below your chest.

It will also help if you plant your feet against a wall for extra stability.

Movement: As you exhale, slide your hands forward ensuring that you keep your elbows slightly bent but locked in position. Keep your abs tight.

You should only take this movement to the point that you feel comfortable with. The more you do this exercise, the better the range of movement you will get.

When you have reached your movement limit, slide your hands back to the start position as you inhale.

MILITARY BURSTS (P)

STAGE 1



MILITARY BURSTS (P)

STAGE 2



MILITARY BURSTS (P)

STAGE 3



MILITARY BURSTS (P)

STAGE 4



MILITARY BURSTS (P)

STAGE 5



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Military Bursts)

Start position: Get in to a position on the floor so your hands are about shoulder width apart and in line with your mid/upper chest. You should keep your back flat and take the weight of your body. Make sure that you do not dip your head. (This is the push up position)

Movement: Perform a single pushup, once at the top of the pushup movement, perform a squat thrust and once you are at the top of the squat thrust movement you should bring your hands off the floor and move into a position where you are squatting with your body weight resting on the balls of your feet. From this position you should explode into a star jump.

As soon as you have landed from the star jump phase, you should immediately adopt the pushup position again ready for the next rep.

This exercise should flow and you should be constantly moving throughout your exercise time slot.

DORSAL HYPER PULLS

START POSITION



DORSAL HYPER PULLS

TOP OF MOVEMENT



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Dorsal hyper pulls)

Start position: Thread the door attachment through your exercise band of choice and attach the stirrups to each end of this band. Secure the door attachment at the bottom of a closed door ensuring that the stirrups have equal lengths either side.

Lay face down on the floor pointing your toes so the tops of your feet are also in contact with the floor. This position should also be in front of the door that you have attached your exercise band to and at a far enough distance away that when gripping the stirrups (palms facing down), the exercise band is taught when your arms are extended out in front of you

You should keep a flat back and your head and neck should keep this alignment.

Movement: As you exhale you should pull your fists down towards your shoulders whilst simultaneously performing a dorsal raise.

To make this a bit more challenging and bring in your lower back muscles more, you can also try raising your feet off the floor as well.

Once at the top of the movement, you should inhale as you return to the start position.

CLOSE GRIP PUSH UPS

START POSITION



CLOSE GRIP PUSH UPS

TOP OF MOVEMENT



DESCRIPTION OF EXERCISE

(Close grip pushups)

Start position: Get in to a position on the floor so your thumbs are touching and your hands are directly below your chest. Your elbows should be slightly bent and locked into this position. You should keep your back flat and take the weight of your body. Make sure that you do not dip your head.

Movement: Keep your back straight and lower your upper body towards the floor by bending your elbows and breathing in. Allow your elbows to flare out naturally to the sides of your body whilst moving to the top of the movement. Once you are at the top of this movement, as you exhale, raise your upper body back to the starting position. This completes one rep.

MORE INFORMATION

MORE INFO: DOOR ATTACHMENT

This is a variation of the door attachment that I have used on several of these exercises.

It is important when using this piece of equipment that you use it on the side of a door that opens away from you.

This way there is less chance that the door will open and the attachment will come loose.

Always make sure that this attachment is very secure before using.



MARATHON TRAINING AND DISTANCE RUNNING

There are many ways in which you can progress in the fitness world. There are lots of different routes that you can travel down. For instance, someone starting out may decide that they want to become more muscle bound and favor the resistance training side of fitness over the cardiovascular side.

Everyone will have a different story. Here is an excerpt from one of my other books. It is my story of becoming a long distance runner. If you do feel that you would like to take up running and work on your cardio vascular and fat burning fitness potential, why not learn from my mistakes and personal experience?

You will always get to where you want to be a whole lot quicker if you learn from someone else's mistakes.

EXCERPT FROM:
“MARATHON TRAINING AND DISTANCE RUNNING
TIPS”

I know there are plenty of books out there about this type of training but I would like to share my first-hand experience of developing from a guy who couldn't run 1.5 miles in 15 minutes to a guy who could be handed a pair of running shoes and be standing confidently at the start line of a marathon in the time it took to tie those shoes up. That was all the preparation time that I needed.

Oh, and I got to a point when I could cover the same 1.5 mile distance that I was previously so bad at in 8 minutes and 22 seconds!

Let's start at the beginning;

It was summer 1999 and I had just finished my secondary school education, not being an academic and not knowing what I wanted to do with my life, I decided to enroll for a business studies class at college. It wasn't long before I realised that sitting in an office was not something that I really wanted to do. (Looking back, this was a fairly good opportunity but “you live you learn” I suppose)

Anyway, about six months in to this college education, I decided that I wanted a bit of excitement from my life and the thought of being average Joe with a regular nine to five job made me pretty depressed.

It was at this point that I ventured into the local army careers office.

“So, do you have any idea what you want to do as a job in the army?” asked the sergeant on the front desk.

I had heard a lot about airborne forces and the parachute regiment and wanted a piece of that.

“Yeah I want to look at joining the paras” I said not realizing at that time that you don’t simply “join the paras”!

“Ok, let’s have a chat” he replied (probably thinking “Jeez! Here’s another one with absolutely no clue!”)

The sergeant had a good chat with me, and concluded that I should look at getting a trade in the Royal Engineers and I could then volunteer for Para training at a later date. This way I would have a trade, be on higher pay and also get to jump out of planes and serve with airborne forces.

To go down this path however, I would need to pass the aptitude test at a higher level. I took this aptitude test 4 times with a 6 week gap between tests before the Sergeant just gave me a pass. (I actually think I failed the fourth time as well but he just fixed my score. It was good to see someone give me a chance)

So that was me going to the next stage of the army selection process. And this was the Fitness testing stage!

These fitness tests were over a long weekend where all potential recruits are taken to an army training center and tested on attitude, strength, endurance and checked if they were medically fit.

As I was into weight training at the time, I did well with the strength tests but on the last day there is a mile and a half run that must be completed in something like 15 minutes. This is very achievable and you could probably do this at a fast paced walk.

This circuit is led by a PTI who is the pace maker. If you stick with this guy, you will pass. Simple!

There were about 20 guys on this stage of the selection process with me and we all started at a steady jog close to the PTI.

At about a minute in to the test, my breathing was all over the place, my lower back was giving me pain and I started to get a stitch. I must have looked like I was at the final few miles of a marathon!

I remember the PTI turning to me and shouting;

“What’s up Atkinson? You got a sucking chest wound?”

Before laughing and leaving me to drop back behind the whole squad.

When I eventually crossed the finish line I gave my name to one of the corporals and he noted my time down. Needless to say this was a big fat fail and if I did want to join the army, I would have to start some kind of running programme.

Back at the careers office, the same sergeant that I had originally spoken to gave me a fitness plan to follow so I could try again in six months’ time.

So getting into the army wasn’t as easy as I had first thought and I was glad that I had been put on the “Trade path” rather than the “parachute regiment path” at this point.

College was still in the picture and I would get up an hour earlier each morning and run around a two mile circuit that I had planned out. At first this took 25 minutes and within a few weeks it was down to seventeen minutes. Sorted!

The time came for the next selection process and I flew through it, sticking with the PTI and being amongst the first to cross the finish line on the final mile and a half test.

I finally joined the army in 2001 so this had taken me the best part of two years!

ONE LAST THING....

I would like to take this opportunity to send you a sincere thank you for purchasing this book. It really means a lot to me that you chose this over all of the other competition.

I would also like to let you know that this was Self-published. This means that I have had no help with promotion or financial backing in the writing, editing, design and publishing process of this book.

I strongly believe that this is a very good guide and I would like to get it into the hands of as many people in need of real weight loss and fitness help as possible.

Therefore I would be delighted if you would mention this to your friends if you think that they will benefit from it. Facebook it, tweet it, blog it! ☐

Many thanks, good luck and I look forward to hearing from you!

All the very best

Jim

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