



THE NEW YOU







THE NEW YOU

**10 proven strategies
for weight loss
and better health**



MANNY SINGH

The New You: 10 Proven Strategies for weight loss and better health

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my wife Poonam who stood by me through thick and thin, my daughter Yashi who is my inspiration, my parents especially my mother who taught me to never ever give up no matter the circumstances.

To all my friends, Coaches and Mentors who work hard to make me a better person and Entrepreneur.

This book is also dedicated to all dreamers who came from nothing and made something of themselves.



Preface

Thank you for choosing this book. By picking up this book, you are making an effort to improve your and your loved one's health. While we all are awesome as we are, the hunger for becoming a better version of ourselves should always be alive in all of us. Personally, I keep trying on a daily basis to find a better ME by keeping myself active with workouts and following a sensible diet.

As a person who struggled with obesity in the past, I am glad to have written this book, which will help you to understand about fitness and will provide you tools to lose weight and maintain a healthy lifestyle. As I sailed through my journey "from fat to fit", I know how effective these strategies are. I hope these strategies will help you in the same effective way. If you are already fit, you can still read this book to learn some useful tools that could improve your health and fitness.

Healthy regards

Manny Singh

(Fitness Expert/Entrepreneur)

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Introduction

This book has been written to help readers with various tools and techniques to lose weight and to stay fit. If implemented on a continuous basis, these techniques will help in mapping out a consistent fitness routine. This book addresses topics such as mindset and physical factors as well as routines and external factors such as eating healthy and maintaining a balanced diet. This book also addresses how to handle internal issues which can contribute to weight gain, such as stress.

Once you benefit from this book, pass the book on to a family member or friend who you think would benefit from it too.

Chapter 1

Desire to be fit – why it is important to start with a strong desire



“Your Success is
defined by your desire
to move forward
irrespective of setbacks”

Manny Singh
Entrepreneur/Author



What does it take to be fit from fat?

How many times you have tried a new fitness routine over the years?

This book will help you to understand how to lose weight. Most importantly it will help you in knowing how to maintain a healthy weight and lifestyle, as being fit is a continuous process.

Your journey to achieve something always begins with a desire. Desiring something is half the challenge. We, as humans, are always fueled by our desires. If your desire is to stay fit, then this book is for you. If you do not have the zeal to reduce your weight, then I suggest you gift this book to someone who does. This statement may seem harsh, but this book is a very effective tool towards weight loss. Our actions are driven and pushed forward based on our desires. If there is no desire to lose weight, any effective tool would be proven to be ineffective. There are a few techniques mentioned in the book to keep you focused on your weight loss.

Ignition – how do you set fire to your desire?

Ignition always starts with understanding where you stand and understanding why you need to change. Without understanding these two factors, the desire for ignition and improvement may lack effectiveness.

Consider where you stand currently with your weight and fitness, why you want to improve, and this can definitely ignite the spark in you to drive towards fitness and weight loss.

When you are aware of where you currently stand, and what it will look like when you shed weight, this will add fuel to the ignition that has already started:

- You'll slash your risk of heart disease, stroke and Type II Diabetes.
- You'll reduce your risk of certain cancers (and their recurrence).
- You'll keep your bones strong.
- It can help ward off dementia.
- You'll give your immunity a boost.
- You'll sleep better.
- Your mood and mental health will improve.

Why is it not enough when we lose weight to SOME extent?

Well... The answer is...

Weight Loss and
maintaining a healthy
lifestyle is a process that
doesn't have a "period".

To answer this question in an “easy to understand” way, I would love to share my personal experience. I weighed 110 kgs and reduced to 85 kgs. But was it enough? I was still overweight based on my height and BMI (Body Mass Index). Due to being overweight I avoided getting my photo taken. We took some photos on my daughter’s 6th Birthday in 2010 and I was really shocked when I saw the pictures. I couldn’t believe it was me! Overweight, fat and I looked like an old man. Then and there, at that moment I decided enough is enough. Something had to change. A desire to get fit took over and it became an obsession. Even though I was not sure how I would lose weight, I started hitting the gym day after day and fought against habitual negative thoughts. I took control of my nutrition. My plan was to lose weight - at least 10 kg, in the coming six months.

Was it easy? Not at all, the journey was much harder than jotting it down on paper! But the thing that made it easier was to focus on reaching my goal. Breaking my goal into multiple short goals was helpful and resulted in a better focused approach. While my overall goal was to lose 10 kg in six months, my key focus was on day-to-day workouts and my eating routine. That way, achieving my goal became much easier.



How much you love
yourself defines how
much you can
love the world
outside of you!





“DESIRE creates
the power.”

Raymond Holliwell
Highly Acclaimed Author of book
“Working with the Law”



Chapter 2

Baby steps



“Greatness doesn’t
come overnight.
It comes one step
at a time”

Trish Downing
Ironwomen Finisher
Paratriathlete
Motivational Speaker





“We are what we do
repeatedly.
Excellence, then,
is not an action.
It’s a habit”

Aristotle
Philosopher and Scientist





“We will surely become
what we want to be,
ONLY by being what
we want to be,
consistently, each day”

Richard G Scott
Scientist and Religious leader



Would you ever sit in your car without knowing where are you going? I doubt it. We don't set off on a journey unless we know our destination.

Because if you don't know where you are going then it is very unlikely you will get there.

Exactly the same thing happens with many of the fitness routines people start...

Often people join a gym without a clear picture of what they want to achieve and what time-frame, such as lose 5 kg in 3 months. Without a clear goal and direction they lose motivation within a few months and are unable to achieve sustainable weight loss or health goals. Also, some people make lofty goals without estimating the efforts and time it takes to achieve these goals. For example, someone who wants to lose 20 kg in three months. They are doomed to failure and setting themselves up for disappointment from the beginning. Within a month or so they get frustrated that the expected results have not been achieved! This is the one of the major causes of failure that gets in the way of a consistent weight loss routine.

We all get impatient with things that are unknown.

It's easy and quick to gain weight but can be very difficult and tedious to lose weight. The simple logic people miss here is that, we need to feed our body to provide the necessary nutrition every day. Unfortunately every meal we eat won't be perfect or full of nutrients, some meals might be rich in fat, carbohydrates or sugar that will make us gain weight without noticing. Also, metabolism slows down after age 30, meaning you burn less calories than you did in your 20s. For women, the hormone changes following pregnancy and menopause can also add on the kilos. We will gain weight until we regularly exercise and maintain a balanced diet.

Baby steps are the answer

If you suddenly find yourself obese or overweight and never been to a gym before it could be a very daunting task to lose weight. But with the right attitude and commitment anything is possible.

Don't be overwhelmed by the efforts and time it will take to reach your goal. Just focus on immediate baby steps. Such as if you have never been to a gym before just focus on going to a gym for 30 minutes 3 days per week for 12 weeks. Don't think about the results you are getting or whether you are losing weight or not. Just give your complete attention to building your routine, that is going to a gym 3 times in a week and do it no matter what. Routine creates miracles.

For example, if your target is to run 10 km in 30 days, don't start running 10 km on the first day. Start running for 1 km per day. This way you can easily complete the target for that day and you will feel like a winner because you have achieved your goal for the day. Pat yourself, celebrate, take a selfie and tweet to motivate others as well. Then gradually increase the kilometres.

Increase the distance you run every few days and you will eventually attain the goal of running 10 km.

Top up the fuel before it finishes!

Commitment and winning are two inseparable things. If you have no motivation you can't win. But on the other hand, if you don't win consistently, motivation goes down as well.

Why do we fail?

One of the biggest reasons is what we believe in and what we think about ourselves. People are not inherently negative, but there is a situational negative thinking that comes up from time to time in all of us. Negative thinking is something that goes hand-in-hand with failure.

We fail because we can't sustain the same motivational levels for a long period of time. So, break the journey into short milestones. Using this technique, you will have more success.

If habitual negative thinking beats you down, commitment and building a routine is the solution. When you are committed to do or achieve something, you find a way to take action.

Our habitual negative thought patterns will always beat you down and will give reasons why you can't lose weight or get fit, but one small walk will have the ability to break this negative thought patterns. Actions make you too busy to think negatively.



“ONLY if you
keep going,
you will get there
one day
and stay there”



Chapter 3

Make a road map

Where are you heading to now?

You are working towards a new YOU, a person who is healthy and fit and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Creating a road map is very important for your weight loss journey and fitness. Fitness is not a short sprint, it is a marathon so you need to ensure you are achieving your milestones otherwise boredom sets in. Have a clear road map with tangible and achievable milestones to make goals reachable. Small wins give us confidence and reason to celebrate. So make sure you create a road map for your fitness journey.

You can use the following steps to create a road map for your health and fitness journey.

Know your why and goal

Knowing your why is critical for your weight loss success, so start with a compelling why. Create short term goals like 20 minutes jogging, 2 times per week. Once you become comfortable with this routine, increase the time. You can try different activities as well.

To add variety, you can do low-impact cardiovascular or weight training for 30 minutes, 2 days a week. Then walk on a treadmill or outdoors for 30 minutes, 1 day a week.

Write down your goals

Measure your progress by writing down your goals on a paper or digital device and what you have completed each day, including the type of physical activity and how long you spent doing it. Seeing your progress is a great motivator to keep pushing yourself.

Consult with your physician, if necessary

If you are a man and aged over 40 or a woman and aged over 50, or have a chronic health problem such as heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, osteoporosis, or obesity, and haven't participated in any exercise program for a long time then it is advisable to speak to your General Practitioner before starting a physical exercise program.

Ask 3 questions to map your success

Think about answers to the following three questions. You can write your answers on paper or a digital device.

Your answers will be your road map to your health and fitness journey.

What, exactly, will you do?

List the activities you would like to do, such as walking, joining a sports team, exercising with a YouTube video, dancing classes, swimming, cycling, or taking a group class at a gym or community centre.

Think about sports or other physical activities that you enjoyed doing when you were younger. Could you enjoy one of these activities again? Such as playing cricket?

Who are your supporters?

List the people - your spouse, siblings, parents, or friends - who can support your efforts to become physically active. Give them ideas about how they could be supportive, like offering encouraging words, watching your children, or working out with you and keeping you away from negative influences.

When will you start and what's your deadline?

Set a date when you will start getting physically active. The date might be the first meeting of a group class you have signed up for, or a date you will meet a friend for a run. Write the date on your calendar. Then stick to it. Before you know it, exercise will become a regular part of your life. Also make sure you have a deadline to achieve your fitness goal. Without a very clear written deadline it is easy to drift away from your goal. Make small milestones along the way. If your goal is to lose 20 kg, make the first milestone when you lose 5 kg and celebrate your win.

Chapter 4

Mindset and visualisation



“Your fitness is a
100% mental game,
as the body won’t go
where your
MIND doesn’t
TAKE it”

Manny Singh
Entrepreneur/Author





“Your BODY has
the ability to achieve
what your
mind believes
is doable”





“Fitness,
like marriage,
needs equal
commitment.
You can’t cheat on it
and expect it to work”



First it always seems impossible, until it is done. A road block on the way to your fitness journey is a mental state that is not supportive if you haven't build a regular exercise routine. Though a great fitness routine has a lot to offer in terms of good health and stunning looks, some people find it extremely difficult to begin and settle down to a fitness routine.

What is your reason?

Let's understand the reasons first, in order to come up with the solutions. A few common reasons which people come up with, when asked about exercise and physical activity:

- I am too busy.
No one is really too busy for something that they prioritise. Period.
- I feel totally drained after a workout.
Keep enough water and snack supplies with you.
- I find it difficult to commit time on a daily basis.
Make a fixed schedule when you can work out.
- I don't have enough motivation.
Motivation is something you can manage. Find a technique that works for you.
- I am only slightly obese, if I eat less, I will lose weight and remain fit.
We know that eating less will only create fatigue. It may help you look lean but it is not an active or smart lifestyle choice.

Remember: "excuses cannot burn calories".

Clear your mind to make a way to establish an uninterrupted workout routine. The reason why emphasis is placed on the word 'routine' is because unless

your workouts become a routine, it won't help you in the long term. If you are taking any physical activity such as running, group classes, strength training, swimming it must be part of your lifestyle not just a one off activity to achieve your weight loss goal.

Here are a few very effective techniques to create a perfect mindset to establish a fitness routine:

Ask yourself, “why do I need to do this”

For you to understand why you need a regular workout routine, it is important to ask a few questions of yourself. “Are you the same active person as you were five years before”, “Is your performance lessening at work, because you feel more fatigue”, “How often do you play with the kids”, Do you feel always feel tired and have no energy”. These types of questions will remind you of the consequences of being overweight and unfit. When you know what is missing, you will definitely work on getting it back. The only way to get an active YOU back is to find an important enough reason to start. The reason could be anything. Such as losing weight or getting fit for a special event, Looking awesome for your wedding anniversary, being able to participate with kids in their sporting activities or complete your first charity run or hike Mount Everest. There must be something that you are looking forward to when you start your fitness journey.

Keep it reachable

Set short goals to begin with, so that you can celebrate achieving them. Think going to the gym as a lifestyle activity that is part of your daily routine not just a 3 month weight loss goal. Have your focus on process goals such as - I need to go to gym for 30 minutes, 5 days in a week and give 100% to that activity. Set daily and weekly goals and ensure that you are celebrating your small wins.

This further motivates you to achieve the bigger goals. When you break the goals down into smaller steps, it becomes easy to conquer.

Let people know

When people know that you are on a mission to reduce weight and keep up your fitness, they will support your goals and keep you accountable. Another advantage of making people aware of your routine is that someone you know may join you when doing your workouts.

T.R.A.C.K.

What you measure you achieve. It is critical that you measure all the activities and progression you are making to keep motivated. Also maintain a nutrition log or any digital app that could keep track your food intake. If you don't know what you need to change then how could you make a change and improve. So it is very important to maintain an exercise and nutrition log from the beginning. Keep a track of your workout sessions and nutrition as this helps you to stay focused and motivated.

Celebrate small wins

Reward yourself to achieve any milestone win or smaller accomplishment such as able to do 10 push ups that you never thought possible, losing 0.5 kg body fat or completing your first charity run. Reward yourself with a movie night with family or friends or weekend away. Make sure it doesn't involve any kind of binge eating. Otherwise it won't take much to diminish all the results you have achieved so far. Let your friends and family know when you achieve milestones such as "completed first two weeks of workout without a break", "reduced 6 kg weight as planned". This will help you to keep achieving your goals.

Do NOT starve

If you do not eat sufficiently, you will experience fatigue. Since you are working out, eat as much healthy food as required. It has also been found that insufficient intake of calories can cause depression in people. If you starve then you might lose some weight but hunger cravings will make you binge eat. All your efforts will be in vain if you don't eat regular meals.

How visualisation can help you achieve your fitness goals?

Visualisation is a form of creative imagination. It can really help in your fitness journey because it works from the inside out to change your biochemistry and neural pathways. Along with regular exercise and a balanced diet start imagining your ideal body or how would you feel when you achieve your fitness goal and what will you wear. Imagine how will you feel and what people will say to you.

Use the following techniques for visualisation:

Make affirmations:

Use positive affirmations for your health such as

- " I am now getting healthier and fitter"
- "I now enjoy going to the gym"
- "I now enjoy doing exercise and eating healthy meals"

Imagine the future with emotions:

Imagine how exactly you will look and feel when you achieve your desired fitness goal, what will you wear, at compliments you will get from your loved ones. Imagine with feelings.

Visualisation is a great tool if it is used with strong emotions and you will see results faster.

You can use visualisation in all areas of your life to achieve success.

Chapter 5

**Regular exercise
is key to success**



“Those who don’t find
time for exercise,
will have to find
time for illness”

Edward Stanley
English Statesman and Earl of Derby



Exercise is a key ingredient to losing weight and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Unfortunately the majority of the population miss this step. I am an Indian and in our culture people place a lot of value on food but not many people put effort into getting fit and remaining in shape. Most of our older population suffer from ailments such as joint pain, arthritis, diabetics and blood sugar. Some of these ailments can be linked to lack of physical activity or a sedentary lifestyle.

Health is something that needs to be prioritised. Without making it part of your daily routine it is hard to maintain a sustainable healthy lifestyle.

One of the biggest problems anyone faces is time. How do you fit exercise time in? We have time for all the things that we value most whether it is family, food, earning a living or other things that we care about.

Why exercising is a great tool to get fit and lose weight

You have probably been told many times that you should exercise more often. But do you really understand why you should exercise?

For beginners, exercise is good for the whole body including your mind. This is because your body produces a chemical called endorphins that is also known as "Feel Good" or "Runners High" chemical which when released gives you that happy and good feeling experience.

Many individuals who start an exercise program report that they start sleeping better at night. They also report feeling much better overall.

For women, exercising can help reduce the risk of osteoporosis. Exercise can help improve your muscle mass and strengthen your bones. This is a definite advantage as you head into middle age.

Exercise is great for those who want to lose weight. In fact exercise will be a crucial factor in weight loss and maintaining it after you have achieved your desired weight loss goal.

Being overweight puts you at risk of developing high blood pressure, diabetes, and for having a heart attack. With a little weight loss and exercise added in, these risks can be reduced drastically, and results can be seen very quickly.

Exercise should be part of your daily life and it doesn't have to involve running 20 kilometres a day or exercising for many hours. If you want to be an athlete, bodybuilder or powerlifter then you may choose to do so, otherwise a walk around the block, 30 minutes jogging, swimming, dancing and other physical activities will help you improve your health and well-being.

The principles of exercise

Before starting an exercise program understand the principles of exercising. This will help you realise why you need to exercise regularly and what changes you can expect to see in your body.

- Exercise regularly – get yourself into an exercise schedule and then stick to it. Aim to do some form of exercise such as walking or swimming at least 3 times each week.
- Track your progress – keep an exercise journal and jot down when you exercise, what type of exercise you did and for how long. Also note how you felt during and after the exercise. You can compare this information to see how you are improving as the weeks go by.
- Balancing your exercise – it is important to do some type of cardiovascular exercise each day such as running, bike ride, swimming, dancing or any

activity that makes your heart rate increase but you want to balance this out by doing strength and toning exercises as well. This will help your body to get into better shape quickly.

- Variety in your workouts – You want to keep your exercise fun. This is a very important factor. I have personally noticed in my own gym, one of the main reasons people leave a gym is boredom. People don't want fancy treadmills, cross trainers, weight machines or fancy bathrooms in a gym. People want to achieve their fitness goals and without variety in the training program, people lose interest and boredom takes over. When people get bored they try to find reasons for not going to the gym and stop coming altogether. You can change this by adding variety to your exercise program. Change your exercise program every six to eight weeks and make it challenging and fun. Why not go to a boot camp class or take a Zumba class? This will help keep you motivated by not becoming bored with your exercise routine.
- Set realistic fitness goals – by setting goals you are giving yourself something to work towards. You can set small goals of walking so many steps or kilometres per week. Or if you like to swim, by swimming a certain number of laps per session.
- Listen to your body – this is particularly true if you are recovering from some type of injury. If you have a knee injury then you need to work with your physiotherapist and don't overdo your exercise. It takes time to recover so it is important to listen to your body and adapt your exercise routine accordingly.
- Recovery is important – it is important to allow your body time to recover from training. This is very important when doing any kind of strength training. Try to train alternative days with different types of training. For example do cardiovascular training on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays

and strength training on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Saturday you can add some more cardiovascular training and keep Sunday as a rest day. Make a fitness routine that works around your lifestyle.

Finding the right fitness routine

Research shows that for adults aged 18 and over it is recommended that you get 150 minutes of exercise per week. This includes activities such as walking, cycling and running. It is also recommended to do some type of weight bearing or resistance training at least twice per week.

It means ideally you should exercise 5 days per week for 30 minutes per time.

Plan your fitness goals

Your very first step is to plan what your goals are for your exercise routine.

What would you like to achieve in the gym?

This could include:

- Losing weight
- Running your first 5 km charity run
- Gaining muscles
- Rehabilitation from injury
- Toning/body building
- Having more energy

It is a good idea to write down your goals on a piece of paper and paste it somewhere you can see it daily. Your fridge or bathroom mirror is a good place, somewhere you will see it every day.

Motivation: Knowing what motivates you is going to be important too. Here are some pointers:

- Do you enjoy being in a group environment?
- Are you more of a go solo person?
- Do you enjoy the outdoors?
- Does going to the gym interest you?

If you enjoy a group training environment then taking a Zumba or kick boxing class might work for you. For those who enjoy exercising by themselves you can cycle, swim lengths at your local pool or walk.

Outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy cycling, walking, hiking, swimming, ice skating and skiing. Many of these activities can be done as a group or alone.

Time management

When planning your exercise time don't go overboard. Think carefully about how much time you can devote to exercise each day or each week. You need to be realistic, otherwise your well laid out plans won't last very long.

If you are a morning person can you get up a little earlier to fit in a quick walk or bike ride? Even a quick 15 minute walk or ride can help get you off to a good start.

Determine what your lifestyle will allow. If you have to get kids off to school can you exercise once they have left for the day? Do you live close enough that you could all walk or bike to school each day? If you have children, then getting your children involved in exercise is a smart idea and helps them understand the benefits of exercise at a younger age.

If you work, can you fit in a 10 minute walk during your lunch break? Start taking the stairs at work and at the mall instead of the elevator.

Another great idea is to download some fitness apps to your smartphone.

This allows you to try out several types of exercise plans. Then once you have found one that you really enjoy you can look into it some more. Apps can be downloaded for free or for just a few dollars.

Working out when time is tight

If you find you have a really tough schedule there are still ways you can fit in some exercise. The easiest way to fit exercise time in is to schedule it into your calendar. Book yourself an exercise appointment and then stick to it!

Choose to exercise at a time when your energy level is high. If you find yourself tired and sluggish in the evening you probably won't exercise. Maybe early morning or during your lunch break is a better solution.

By exercising when you feel more energetic you are more likely to stick with your routine and make it a habit. Three weeks of exercising will turn into a habit, you will start to look forward to working out and will miss it if you skip a session.

If time is a problem try adding in three exercise sessions with each one lasting about 10 minutes.

Choosing an exercise that you really enjoy will help you fit in exercise time. Maybe you can get together with some co-workers and organise an exercise group. This could be as simple as getting together before or after work each day and walking.

You may enjoy tennis, dancing, yoga or want to take a self-defense class. By doing something that you enjoy or by learning something new you are more likely to stick with it longer.

There is always some type of new exercise trend going on. Everyone joins in but what happens is when this trend slows down, your enjoyment levels drop

and you stop going. Plus the hottest exercise class may be more expensive. For example a Functional Training franchising is booming in recent years and it costs a lot to sign up with them but if you are motivated enough and can create a routine for yourself then you can get the same health benefits at fraction of their membership fees.

Many workplaces have discounted corporate memberships or wellness groups you can take advantage of. If your workplace doesn't have an arrangement try to see if they are willing to organise it. Other workers will probably be eager to participate too.

If you sit at a desk all day then try doing simple exercises at your desk. This can include stretching, yoga moves and neck and shoulder shrugs. You should always try to get up at least once an hour and move around. Even if this is to only stretch your legs or get a drink of water.

Remember that just moving more is going to help your body become more flexible. Try to walk around more often. Park your car further away from your office building and if you take public transport get off one or two stops earlier. Do you live close enough to work that you could walk or cycle there a couple of times a week?

When making time for exercise is a problem bear in mind that seeing actual results of your exercise routine will take time to notice. But some benefits you will start reaping straight away such as you will start to sleep better and have more energy.

Don't make these fitness mistakes

Too many individuals begin an exercise routine and suddenly two or three weeks later they give up. Don't let this happen to you this time around. Find out what the biggest fitness mistakes are and then take steps to avoid becoming a victim.

Setting unrealistic goals

This is one of the biggest mistakes people make. If your goal is to run a marathon, then don't expect to do this within a month. It takes time for your body to adjust to a new routine and you have to build your stamina and endurance levels. You can't get up to the sixth step of a ladder from the first step, it has to be one step at a time. Anything worthwhile takes time and effort. The same rule applies to fitness. Make a realistic goal, do the hard work and have patience. In time you will start reaping the benefits of increased levels of health and fitness.

Your best course of action is to set mini goals for each week and month and work towards achieving them.

Doing too much too soon

This includes going full swing into an exercise routine. If you suddenly start exercising a couple of hours each day when you have done nothing before you are setting yourself up for failure.

You will probably injure yourself and experience joint or muscle pain. For example if you hurt your knee muscle from over exercising it can take months to recover.

Start off slowly and as you find the exercise becoming easier add more to it. Small steps will be less stressful on your body. As well, you will feel as though you are accomplishing something in return.

Poor nutrition

Exercise and nutrition really do go hand in hand. If you start exercising but don't watch what you eat then you won't get the results you are wanting. By eating in a healthy manner you will feel better and see results more quickly. The easiest changes you can make are to switch out foods like lollies, cakes, chips and soft drinks for healthier alternatives. Try switching your soft drink to

water or at least cut down on the amount you drink.

By adding more fresh fruits and vegetables you are helping build a stronger and healthier body. Your muscles, bones and organs will begin to work more efficiently.

You may find that eating a little more protein helps you with your exercise routine. Try to include protein with each meal. This can include have an egg for breakfast, having nuts as a snack and adding lean meats such as chicken and fish to your lunch and dinner.

More than just cardio

It is really important to understand that your body requires more than just cardio exercises. While doing cardio is great much of the time this only works the larger muscle groups of your body. It is important to add exercises that workout other smaller muscle groups.

This is why it is recommended that you add some type of weight or resistance training to your routine. This type of training helps to build your bone strength and helps sculpt and tone your body.

Don't become obsessed with the scale

This is a mistake that people make and is the one thing that can jeopardise your whole exercise regimen. There is nothing worse than exercising all week and eating correctly and then getting on the scale to see that you have gained weight.

You must remember that as you lose fat you will lose weight. When you start to build muscle you can gain weight. This is simply because muscle weighs more than fat!

Your main focus should be on losing fat and gaining muscle and not worrying about the number on the scale. Instead I suggest that you record your body

measurements. This will give you a good indication that you are losing centimetres and that your body is changing.

Getting your family moving

If you are married or have family then exercise should really be a family affair. Everyone will benefit and it is a great way to spend quality family time together. Exercising will help your children and spouse increase their muscle mass, sleep better, have more energy and build self-esteem and confidence.

It is recommended that children in the 5–17 age group get at least 60 minutes of daily activity. The activity level should change and include sports like bike riding, running and swimming. Then, for at least 3 days, exercises that help strengthen muscles should be included.

How do you fit this in to your day? Go with your children for an after dinner walk, swim, bike ride or skate depending upon the weather. If your kids participate in sports at school or an after school program they may be fitting in their daily exercise.

Another way to have some family exercise time is to purchase one of the Wii Sports games and play this together. Then you have no excuses such as the weather is bad or I can't get to the gym!

For seniors getting in the recommended amount of exercise can be harder. It is much easier to try and do 5-10 minutes first thing in the morning, then 20 minutes in the afternoon and another 5-10 minutes in the afternoon.

Using a pedometer to exercise

One very inexpensive tool is a pedometer and this is a great way to keep track of how much exercise you do each day. A pedometer will measure your daily steps and this can then convert into how active you are.

- 5,000 steps or less = Sedentary
- 5,000 to 7,500 = Low Activity
- 7,501 to 9,999 = Somewhat Active
- 10,000 to 12,499 = Active
- 12,500 and up = Very Active

From this chart you can see why many sources recommend that you get in at least 10,000 steps per day. You can purchase a pedometer from places like Kmart, Rebel Sports and eBay both on and off line. For under \$50 you can easily purchase a good pedometer and one that will help calculate the amount of calories you burn each day as well.

How to use your pedometer effectively

Put your pedometer on first thing in the morning. Clip it on while getting dressed. Keep your pedometer on all day and check it every couple of hours. At first just record the number of steps that you take until you get into bed at night. This will be your starting base. After recording your steps the first time you might be surprised at just how inactive you are. Maybe you only recorded 3,000 steps. If this is the case don't worry, just work on increasing the number each day. Why not keep a journal and record the number of steps taken. Do this over a month's time and you can see how much you progress in a month.

To increase the number of steps you take each day check your pedometer every two hours. Then make a point of adding another couple of hundred steps. This could be done by walking to the mail box, walking up and down stairs or just taking your dogs out for a bathroom break!

If you are working why not get together with a group of friends and have a pedometer challenge?

Exercising with health issues

It's very likely that one of the reasons that you are not currently exercising is due to an injury. What many don't realise is that the best way to recover is to actually start exercising the injured muscle or joint. Yes this is going to hurt and you will want to exercise under the close supervision of a doctor or therapist.

Muscles that don't feel as though they are healing are feel tight and sore because they have contracted.

For example, if you damage the knee muscle in your knee area known as the meniscus, your best course of action is to start working out your knee. Physiotherapy can help get you mobile again. Your therapist will recommend using a stationary bike with a very low resistance to get your movement back again.

Within two to three weeks you will start doing leg exercises and slowly add weights to your ankle. This process may hurt to some extent but you need to get your muscles stretched again. Building up your meniscus is important so that your knee bones don't start to rub against one another.

If you are dealing with any type of injury then see your doctor for advice first. Exercise slowly and remember to apply ice to the injured area after working out. You should feel your joint or muscle area improve within the first few weeks of moderate exercise. The key is to keep exercising regularly and to slowly build the intensity.

Exercise tips:

- Do a few stretches before starting your main exercise
- Listen to your body and identify pain as opposed to soreness
- Slowly decrease the intensity level before ending your workout

- Perform stretches again
- Ice the injured area

If you have suffered a major injury then seek medical advice before starting on any type of fitness routine. Just be aware that getting back into exercise can help the injured area recover faster and help you get your mobility back.

Modifying your workout routine

Even if you are feeling sore or a bump has suddenly developed on your hand you can still exercise by doing different things. Learning how to modify your exercise routine is very important. For example, you may have hurt your hand so you can't lift weights. Instead you can go for a walk or a swim. While walking you can stop and do leg squats, arm circles, neck stretches and hamstring curls. If you normally run, change to riding a bike or walking or going for a swim at your local pool. Before you know it you have done 30 minutes of exercise. For smaller injuries there really is no reason why you can't switch your routine and exercises. For any major injury then icing the area and resting is your best course of action. Any pain or swelling that doesn't subside in a couple of days should be seen by a medical professional.

Types of exercises

There are hundreds of different exercises that you can do. Just take a quick look through the available exercise DVDs and videos available on websites such as eBay. There are some wonderful exercise videos on YouTube i.e. (Type Fitness blender) where you will find many great exercises that you can perform in the comfort of your home. You could easily select a couple of different workout routines and try them all. As I mentioned before doing an exercise which you like is important. You are more likely to stick with it than if you try the latest fad just because all your friends are doing it. If you haven't exercised in a while you really are better off starting with something simple

like going for a walk or taking a swim. Swimming is beneficial for your joints and water aerobics classes are very effective. This can be a good choice if you have joints that ache or if you have knee problems. You can start moving again without putting too much weight on your joints. Then as you lose weight or increase your mobility you can begin to add other exercises to your routine.

Another popular exercise is Yoga and this can be done by taking a yoga class or at home using a Yoga DVD. Just be sure to pick up a beginners DVD and watch it through first before attempting the class.

Cycling is another great exercise which can be done in various ways. Spin classes are extremely popular and this trend is expected to increase over the next couple of years. Working out on a stationary bike is perfect for those living in areas where weather conditions aren't suitable for year round biking.

Mountain biking is a wonderful way to get out and see some local scenery. This is a good way to spend time with your family and friends by making it a day out and taking a picnic lunch with you. Just remember to take an emergency repair kit in case you get a flat tyre.

Dance Fitness is popular and currently Zumba classes are leading the way in popularity. These classes are based on Latin American dancing with movements that are easy to do. The music has an uplifting beat to it which no doubt contributes to making you feel energised while dancing. Zumba is great for kids and seniors alike, another great idea for doing some family fitness together.

Core training is an important part of your fitness routine and should be incorporated in your exercise routine two to three times per week. Core training places its emphasis on the middle area of the body including your stomach muscles, pelvis and lower back which all help protect your lower

back. Developing strong hip and lower back muscles also improves the condition of your knee muscles. Core training classes are opening up in gyms everywhere.

Training drills are exercises which can be done anywhere and don't require any special equipment. Training drills include exercises such as high knee stepping, side shuffles and walking quickly backwards a few yards and then rushing forwards. Training drills are excellent to use as a calorie burn workout. Senior fitness classes are becoming very popular and include exercises specifically designed with seniors in mind. These classes are aimed at helping seniors get mobile and active again. Senior fitness classes include swimming classes, yoga, tai chi, Zumba and walking groups.

Should you use a personal trainer?

There seems to be a trend today for hiring a personal trainer but are they worth the money? One of the biggest benefits of hiring a personal trainer is getting one-on-one instruction. With this type of instruction you can be certain that you are performing each exercise correctly. Plus a good personal trainer can help motivate you and help you reach your goals.

It is normally the cost of hiring a trainer that turns people off. Personal trainers can be expensive and it depends on what your fitness goals are. Are you training to run a marathon or enter an iron man competition? If so, the cost might be worth it.

One popular option which is showing up in many fitness clubs is that of sharing a personal trainer. This normally involves 2 or 3 other people training at the same time. We call it semi-private training. This still allows you to receive personalised instruction but at a much cheaper price.

When choosing a personal trainer there are a few points to take into consideration:

- What are their credentials?
- Do they perform a fitness evaluation?
- Do they take a personal history which includes a medical and fitness history?
- Will they design an individualised program for you?
- Are reassessments and adjustments to your training schedule done on a regular basis?

If all of the above points are covered then the chances you have discovered a good personal trainer are good.

Of course when you meet the person you can tell almost immediately if you will get along. Remember you will have to take their advice and their aim is to help you achieve your goals. Hiring a personal trainer is a personal choice. It may be worth hiring one for six weeks so you can get an exercise program developed for you. Then all you have to do is follow it. This option is often a good solution for those with a limited budget.

Chapter 6

Why nutrition is important



“The food you eat can be
either the safest
and most powerful
form of medicine
or the slowest
form of poison.”

Ann Wigmore
Holistic health practitioner
and raw food advocate



Nutrition is a key ingredient for your weight loss journey and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Unfortunately at times we forget the importance of good nutrition and to please our taste buds, eat food we shouldn't eat or overeat. Over time these food choices can increase your weight or you might gain fat in places you don't want to, such as your stomach, hips, legs and upper body.

Gaining weight, suffering from ailments, general fatigue, mental tiredness and many other negative consequences are all mostly attributed to an unbalanced diet regime.

This literally translates to unhealthy choices being consistently and habitually made and in most cases with total disrespect to the body and its workings. Making a serious effort to keep a healthy and well balanced diet is the pivotal point to ensure a long healthy life.

Make eating right a conscious choice

Healthy and balanced diet programs are not necessarily boring and tasteless. With a little research, anyone can design a diet plan that is both tasty and healthy.

It is simply a matter of understanding what foods are good and beneficial to the body and what are not. The food groups can be interchanged to ensure the food appears more appealing while staying true to the idea of a diet consisting of healthy ingredients.

The main groups that make up a healthy and balanced diet plan should include the following:

- Proteins – this is mainly to address muscle building.
- Fats – a balanced intake of omega 3, 6, and 9 is necessary as it also contributes to the general functions of the body.

- Vegetables – there is no particular kind that is recommended above others, however consuming the leafier kinds are thought to be better. Green fibrous veggies are especially recommended for optimum benefit.
- Fruit – containing the least fatty content, fruits are a welcomed dessert option and provide the much needed natural nutrients for the body, as it is also a good source of vitamins.
- Water – most experts in the medical and dietary field would recommend a minimum of one litre of water to be consumed per day. Besides keeping the body hydrated it also helps in assisting the various circulatory systems in the course of carrying out their functions.

Most people today try to find the easiest ways and means of doing things. Unfortunately this may not always constitute the best for the body or mind, that is to say easy does not always equate good.

Understanding that the human body and mind is a machine that needs to be treated with respect and delicacy is an important and first point on the journey towards preserving it, to enable it to always function at its optimum.

Whatever the body and mind take in, either good or bad is what the same body and mind will churn out, therefore making a conscious effort to observe and discern this will eventually lead to beneficial results.

When a person is hungry the instinctive thing to do would be to satisfy that hunger by feeding it. The easiest way to do this is to reach for the nearest fast food or snack that though is fulfilling at the time, is likely to be unhealthy.

Understanding that this action is not only damaging but is also a form of polluting the body should encourage you to seek other and more healthier alternatives.

Keeping healthy snacks at hand such as certain nuts, yogurt, fruits or fruit bars will help resist the urge to turn to fast foods. The healthier snacks not only benefit the body but also help to keep the unwanted weight gain at bay. Keeping occupied is another way to maintain a healthy body and mind state.

Playing games, reading, spending time with family, playing with pets, going on a nature hike, swimming and the list goes on. The main thing to try and do is to be outside enjoying nature as much as possible rather than staying indoors doing something that requires very little interaction, movement or thinking.

The easiest and most rudimentary way of maintaining a balance in one's physical health is to follow a healthy diet and exercise regularly. The focus should be on proper and adequate nutrition, without compromising on variety.

As food is a very important aspect of everyone's daily existence, keeping it exciting and tasty is important.

Importance of water in nutrition

More than 60% of the human body is water. This means that the human body needs a lot of water to function on daily basis. A lot of water is how much water? According to studies, on an average, a person needs 4 litres of water per day. What happens if this amount of water is not supplied? Well, it's like running a car without fuel. It will stop working as efficiently. It is the same with the human body. Water intake is extremely important for a human body to function on a daily basis.

Water is a great purifier too. It cleanses the toxins in your body making your body more efficient and active.

Here are a few facts on to how water can help in reducing weight:

Water keeps up the energy levels: Water is a great aid for proper functioning of the digestion system. The more water you drink the more it helps in transforming your food into energy. This entire cycle keeps you full of energy. This process is helpful especially when you are working out.

Water can reduce hunger: Next time you feel hungry, don't grab a snack, drink a cup of water and wait. If you feel the same hunger levels after some time, then grab a snack. Sometimes water can substitute for a snack. It is because our mind and stomach can misinterpret thirst for hunger. This has been proven in multiple studies.

Water helps in coping with stress: When you have enough water in your body, you will less likely experience constipation, headaches, body stiffness and skin issues.

Tips to increase your water intake:

- Studies reveal that people showed more interest in water flavored with mint than plain water.
- Remember to drink water before you take a bath, go to sleep, go out, go to the gym etc. These small glasses will easily make up to 4 litres of water intake per day.
- When someone offers you a soft drink, the first question to ask yourself is "Do I really need this" or "will it help me in anyway". The answer is no, so when someone offers you a soda, politely tell them you would prefer water.
- Track your water intake on a daily basis.
- Track your skin-tone as you increase your water intake. This will keep you pushing towards drinking MORE water each day.

8 common nutrition myths

1. Cut down calories and you will lose weight faster

This is a very common misconception, that if you consume less calories you will lose weight quicker. If you consume too few calories you will actually send your body into a tailspin that may eventually contribute to weight gain as opposed to weight loss. Your body and brain make a false assumption that you are starving. This message will cause your metabolism to slow down.

According to weight loss experts, diets that are as low as 800 to 1,000 calories per day are dangerous, unhealthy and will lead to weight loss failure. If your body thinks it is suffering from a famine, then it immediately kicks into gear to protect you and will make it really hard to shed excess weight.

If you starve yourself then you will experience undesirable side effects such as cranky mood, lack of focus, lightheadedness and nausea.

Eventually you will have to give your body what it needs and it is likely that you will end up binge eating to compensate for starving it and all your efforts will be in vain. Don't do this to yourself!

2. Being on a strict diet and depriving myself of foods is a good way to lose weight

If you choose a strict diet that severely restricts the foods you eat, such as eliminating one or more food groups or mainly eating only one or two foods, this will bore you and you will lose interest in the diet before too long. The body likes variety and so do your taste buds. Your body needs a number of different vitamins, minerals and nutrients and it can only get these from a variety of food choices.

Don't restrict yourself. This is not an effective means of losing weight and it will not work. Allow yourself to have dessert occasionally if it is what you

desire. Allow yourself to celebrate small wins. Just make sure you don't binge eat. Be conscious when choosing the quantity. Have a small piece of pie or cake or one scoop of ice cream, not two. Deprivation will get you nowhere.

3. Eliminate all foods that are deemed unhealthy

This myth is an extension of number two. If you stop eating EVERY unhealthy food that you enjoy, you will be able to shed weight easier and quicker. This is untrue. You will still remain motivated and on track if you allow yourself to eat an unhealthy favorite food once in a while.

Moderation is the key to losing weight and to keeping it off in the long term. If you really enjoy pizza or a burger from McDonald's then partake of these pleasures now and again and don't allow yourself to feel guilty. You are less likely to fall off the horse so to speak or to binge if you give yourself permission to enjoy "fun foods" occasionally.

4. Eating foods late at night is more likely to pack on the extra kilos

This is a one of the common myths that is believed by many. The truth is that if you regularly consume more calories on a daily basis than your body requires, the excess will be stored as fat. The opposite is also the case - if you take in fewer calories than you burn then you will shed excess weight. For this reason, the time of day you eat becomes irrelevant compared to how much you eat and how much you burn off through physical activity. But it is always a good idea to follow a eating plan or pattern. Heavy breakfast, moderate lunch and light dinner with regular exercise. But if someone works on a Day-Night work roster or works shift work it becomes harder to follow a fixed diet plan when meal time varies based on the work schedule. But if you follow the formula of a vigorous exercise regime and a balanced diet then you can still maintain a healthy lifestyle and lose weight.

According to health experts, you should never go to bed hungry, as this will prevent you from having a good night's sleep. You are fasting while you sleep

after all. That is what breakfast the following morning - break the fast - is all about. Eating something small and light, such as a few crackers and some cheese can actually contribute to a more restful night's sleep.

5. Eating between meals is a big no-no for dieters

It is healthier to eat six or seven small meals and/or snacks throughout the course of a day than to eat three meals and nothing else. If you choose a small healthy snack between meals it can actually do you good. The snack will contribute to strong metabolism and it will keep your blood sugar at a stable level. Snacking between meals in a healthy manner also acts as a way to discourage you from overeating at your next meal.

6. All fat is bad for my health and for my weight loss efforts

Generally fat has a bad reputation. Fat is also good and necessary for the human body. Everyone needs some sort of fat in his or her daily dietary intake.

There are certain fats that are good for the human body such as polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fat. The latter is a healthy fat that provides protection against such things as heart disease and some cancers. Polyunsaturated fat is necessary for the growth of body cells and it also provides the fatty acids that are needed for the health of the skin. Monounsaturated fat is found in such things as olive oil, avocados, nuts, olives, nut butters and canola oil. Olive oil is also instrumental in lowering cholesterol.

Another much talked about healthy fat is omega-3 fatty acids, which are found in shellfish and other types of fish. There are three types of omega-3 fats and the body requires them all. These include ALA, DHA and EPA. In particular DHA and EPA are very important for the healthy functioning of the heart. They reduce inflammation in the arteries; help to lower blood pressure; decrease the level of triglycerides in the blood; play a role in keeping the walls of the arteries as relaxed as possible; and help to make

the composition of the blood less sticky, thereby reducing the chance that a blood clot could take place.

Other potential benefits of consuming an adequate supply of omega-3 fats:

- May decrease the risk of breast cancer, prostate cancer and colon cancer
- Can be useful in the treatment of Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis and rheumatoid arthritis
- Preliminary research studies point to the role this healthy fat plays in treating depression.

To increase your intake of omega-3 fatty acids include more fish in your diet, as well as ground flaxseed and walnuts. One healthy way to add more fat into your diet without packing on pounds is to add a selection of nuts to your salads and to sprinkle ground flaxseed on your yogurt. It is also wise to sauté vegetables in olive oil as opposed to vegetable oil.

7. Skipping meals, especially breakfast, will help me to drop kilos faster

Skipping meals can contribute to packing on more kilos! Weight gain would be the last thing you would want when you are on a weight loss journey and trying to get healthier and fitter. When you skip a meal, your level of metabolism drops and you become very hungry as a result of not eating. When you eat again you will be inclined to overeat. You will also miss the daily calorie requirement that is essential for your good health and wellbeing.

A healthy breakfast is very important to maintain optimum health and lose weight. Your body has fasted for whole night and it needs to be refueled after many hours without food. Just as a car cannot run without petrol, our human body cannot run without necessary fuel. Fuel for the body comes from the foods we eat.

8. Dairy products should be taken out of my diet completely

Dairy products are a necessary part of every person's diet and should never be removed completely, even if you are trying to lose weight. Instead of removing this important food group choose low fat and non-fat kinds of dairy products. This is especially the case for women who require the calcium that is found in rich supply in dairy products.

Research has now revealed the fact that getting enough calcium through the foods you eat and the beverages you consume can actually encourage the shedding of kilos. Drink up!

People who eat a healthy breakfast are less likely to eat too much later in the day. It is easier to lose weight, and to maintain a healthy weight if you start every day with a healthy breakfast.

The fuel that we need for our bodies to function properly comes from glucose. Glucose is a simple form of sugar that provides the body's primary source of fuel. The brain and the central nervous system require glucose to do any type of activity. If you do not give your body the glucose it requires through the foods you consume then it will be forced to use stored carbohydrates as an alternative fuel source.

What makes for a healthy breakfast?

To start your day off right, aim for one serving of protein (which can be found in eggs, milk, cheese, yogurt and peanut butter), two servings of fruit (which helps to give you the recommended daily requirement of vitamins and minerals and helps to prevent constipation) and three servings of grain.

We all have various types of body fats within us. It could be a stubborn fat cell or an easy to break fat cell, but we all have a mixture of fat cells. These fat cells have nothing to do with obesity. When I was young, I used to think that all the lean people were healthy. One day my very lean neighbor passed away due to a heart attack, caused by high levels of cholesterol in his body.

That is when I realised, that being lean does not keep you in the “no danger” zone when it concerns cholesterol levels.

So, what should you do?

In addition to keeping track of what you are eating, you also need to keep track of the calories you are burning.

Remember, calorie intake - calories burnt = fitness,
instead of starving = fitness.

Chapter 7

Fitness routine



“Make time for it.
Just get it done.
Nobody ever got strong
or got in shape
just by thinking about it.
They DID it.”

Jim Wendler
Powerlifter and Strength Coach





Remember!
“If it doesn’t
challenge you,
it cannot change you”

Fred Devito
Exhale Mind Body Spa’s
founding Team Member





“Nothing else
feels as good
as being
continuously fit”





Remember!
There is no
SHORT-TERM fitness
routine; it has to be a
change in lifestyle



Your fitness routine should be the top priority for you in order to make it a habit. Your body should get used to your fitness routine so that a day without a workout should make you feel uncomfortable. That is the state when you are totally in the zone.

How do you start?

It needs a lot of mental and physical stamina to get yourself into a regular fitness routine. Pain should not be a stopper. One should always remember that “pain always indicates that a weakness is leaving you”. Pain makes you stronger in the long term.

Many people start the workout routine with high levels of zeal and enthusiasm. But within a few weeks, they tend to stop and let go of the routine. WHY?

A few reasons why people find it difficult to continue their fitness workouts:

Boredom - group training

“Man is by nature
a social animal”

Aristotle
Philosopher and Scientist

We are all social animals. We need people around us in the form of friends and family. The lesser our social circle is, the more disconnected we become. The same applies to your health and fitness journey as well. If you do not find a

good support system such as group training, training with a personal trainer or training with a friend or family member, a 30 minute workout may feel like 3 hours!

Training on your own can be boring and daunting. Sometimes it can cause injury without proper guidance and training. Don't hesitate to approach a trainer or your doctor or any fitness professional who could assist you in your fitness and weight loss journey. Fitness trainers and professionals are the people who studied to become experts and have specialised knowledge. They know how to prepare a workout schedule based on the age, gender and body flexibility level of the individual.

Daunting workout sessions can be demotivating. This is again another reason why people quit their fitness routine.

Another advantage of group training is that you are being trained by the same person. Hence, group training becomes even more active and less tiring. When you are in a group, often a sense of competition and comradeship arises and that becomes the biggest motivating spirit for you to continue with the training.

When I began my fitness training, my trainer put me in a group with highly self-motivated and active people. This made me continuously question my own efforts and to keep challenging myself. As a result, I developed an enormous zeal that did not let me quit.

Benefits of group training:

Inspires you to do more: The sense of competition you have with a peer group, motivates you to extend yourself. When you are training alone, you may miss out on the sense of challenge as often we feel the competitive spirit more in a group.

Supports you: When you are doing it alone, chances are that you may go wrong or not be able to get the technique right. In these instances, you will not have any support. However, if you are in a group and not doing a workout correctly, you will have multiple hands extended with support and advice.

Consistency: It's easy to keep doing it when you like something. Find a group that you feel comfortable with and train regularly together.

Social networking: You will meet people with the same mindset.

“If you are persistent, you
will get it right.
If you are consistent,
you will keep
getting it right”

“I’ve missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I’ve lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I’ve been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.”

Michael Jordan
American retired professional basketball player,
businessman

You need to keep track of your workouts in order to measure changes. Here are a few tips to keep a tab on your consistency:

Keep a journal

A workout journal will give you much more than tracking. You will see your starting points and where you now stand. You will have a fair idea on how much you have achieved and this should keep you motivated.

Discuss with peers

While your regular updates keep others motivated too, sharing your achievements gives you a sense of self-worth.

Map a schedule

Keep a schedule and mark it every time you attend or miss a work out.

By following these simple strategies, you can keep up the consistency levels. Slowly and eventually, you will get into a fitness routine that will become a habit.

Owning the training

Who is primarily responsible for your workout training? Is it the trainer because you pay for the training session or is it you?

The answer is clear. You have to own your health and fitness journey. Your trainer is a coach and motivator who can push you towards what needs to be done. But the ultimate person with the responsibility for your health and fitness is you and only you. They can't exercise in your place. You have to do it yourself.

When I began my fitness regime, there were days when I felt miserably low and felt like giving it up. The only factor that kept me going was the fact that I kept reminding myself “My goal for today is to complete today’s workout”. I did not leave myself with another alternative, because I only focused on one day at a time. There was no option, such as tomorrow.

Accept that it is not practical to have the same performance and energy levels on all the days of training. Your training performance and energy levels depend on so many factors such as quality of sleep, work and life balance, stress factors and your motivation level to achieve your goal, but if you keep training regularly, irrespective of how you are feeling on a particular day or your motivation level, you will eventually achieve desired results

Feel the fear and DO IT ANYWAY, is the key to keep yourself going.

Deliberate practice

When I started my weight loss journey, I had the same lame list of excuses like: the climate is bad, I can’t go today because I don’t feel good, I am very tired, if I rest one day I will do better tomorrow etc. Due to these reasons, my weight loss journey was always a roller-coaster ride. Sometimes I was too motivated to exercise and sometimes I didn’t exercise for a few weeks. Every time I missed my exercise session it had a direct impact on my weight goal. I always blamed my willpower for not being strong. The thing is, we need to MAKE ourselves strong. No one will do it for us.

It is important to keep your exercise as deliberate as possible. It should be so systematic that there should be some TANGIBLE and IMMEDIATE impact if you miss it, even for ONE session.

How do you do that?

- Make a commitment to go to the GYM 3-5 days per week
- Make someone your referee (Partner or a close friend)
- Put a weekly stake on your weekly commitment (say \$100 per week)
- If you don't go to the GYM 5 days in a week then you have to pay your referee \$100.

What are you doing here ...

- a. Creating a tangible impact of the loss of \$100, if you miss even ONE session.
- b. Making yourself ACCOUNTABLE for that \$100.

This is a very effective strategy that personally helped me a great deal.

Chapter 8

Carrots and sticks: find what works for you



“Once you become
fearless, you
can achieve things
beyond your
imagination”

Manny Singh
Entrepreneur/Author





“Self-motivation
is essential for
individual growth”





“Carrots and Sticks:
Unlock the power
of incentives to
get things done”

Ian Ayres
Economist and Author
Carrots and Sticks



We humans are inherently lazy. We tend to choose a path of least resistance. Very few people are highly motivated and disciplined to build and maintain a consistent routine their whole life. The rest of us start something and do it for some time and then drift away.

We need some kind of motivation to keep going. It could be in the form of Carrots or Sticks. Research shows that for most of us sticks work better. As humans we are more motivated by loss aversion than gaining an incentive. That's why most of us need some kind of stick to lose weight or maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Journal of American Medical Association (JAMA) research found that dieters who were rewarded with monetary rewards or got penalised along similar lines lost three times more weight and were five times more likely to meet weight loss goals in comparison with groups who didn't make any associated Carrot or Stick tied to their goals.

Everyone is different. Find out what works for you as an Incentive or Punishment and use it to your favor. If an incentive of a new dress inspires you to lose 5kg then use this as a motivator. Alternatively, as a stick you will lose your weekly family dinner outing if you don't complete your gym routine such as exercise 5 days in a week.

I have benefited greatly with this technique. I don't respond to 'carrots' but a 'stick' has always worked for me.

All my excuses such as "it's too cold today", "it's too hot outside ", "I will do this tomorrow", "I will do it before the end of today"... All these excuses have slowly started to come to an end for me.

How did I do it?

I registered on a website called www.stickk.com

I made a commitment that I would maintain a five day a week exercise routine. No matter what I would have to do it. I would record my workouts on the website. Any day I didn't complete my workout, \$50 would be deducted from my account.

As I said I am more of a STICK person and this \$50 pinched me too hard. So hard that, I didn't miss even ONE session in the 10 months when I took the commitment challenge.

Yes, there have been days when I felt like I didn't have enough energy or I was tired but I still exercised on those days. It might not have been the best training day but I did it anyway.

Carrots and sticks - tips and strategies:

Your goal should always be measurable - such as "I will run for 3 km every day, within 45 minutes".

A Stick SHOULD hurt. If you keep a stick amount as \$1 for each session missed, it won't hurt you much and you won't take it seriously. Set an amount that really pinches you. Then it will be difficult to ignore it and deal with the guilt. A stick such as \$100 will motivate you, even if you are not feeling like going to the gym.

You can also do the 'stick' with someone who can hold you accountable. You may choose your best friend or your spouse to charge you \$100, if you ever miss a workout.

Chapter 9

Handling social blocks



The people you associate
with have an impact and
influence on your
health and wealth.

Manny Singh
Entrepreneur/Author





Remember!
“No one can judge you
unless they have
walked your path”



Do you ever come across people who say things such as: “Oh dear, you have done so much today? You look tired, why don’t you take a break?”

Or something like ... “You look so thin, if you continue to work out you may experience health issues, please stop immediately”.

Or: “You know there is no point in spending hours in the gym. Just keep a check on what you are eating and that will do, it’s all about calories, right?”

These are the social blocks you may experience on your way to a healthier lifestyle. There will be many people in your life who won’t support your weight loss journey. Just one rule for them. **STAY** Away from them. Any person who doesn’t support your journey to become a better version of you shouldn’t be in your life. Negative people drag you down. Identify people who are negative and keep away from them.

It is not always easy to judge someone, if they are negative or genuinely concerned about you.

Here is how you identify the negative folk:

- Someone telling you constantly that you can’t do it.
- Someone who is always finding fault in the way you are working out.
- Someone who is continuously telling you about the dark side of exercise.

These are the people who are unhappy with their life and they do not want you to succeed in your life. It’s as simple as that.

What makes people talk negative about achievements?

Very often when someone succeeds, we only see their success and have no understanding of what they had to do to get there. Since we don’t know

much about the hardships they faced, we have a rosy expectation about their journey.

How can you turn these negatives into motivating factors?

Remember, people say negative things to you because they envy you. They envy your determination, they envy your healthy routine. They might even envy that you are not like them anymore. You are trying to become a better version of yourself.

- Connect with people who are positive, like minded and encouraging.
- Spend more time with positive people.
- Use your positive social networking to spread the awareness of fitness.
- Tell the world how YOU personally benefit by being fit.

It feels awesome when you inspire and motivate people to get into a healthy routine.

Find your support system

If you are obese, overweight or unhealthy and you have never done any kind of exercise in your life, or never been to a fitness centre, it can be daunting. It can be hard at first when you want to make changes.

Don't hesitate to seek support from Health and Allied Professionals. With the right support your fitness journey becomes easier and you are more likely to achieve your health and fitness goals. These professionals can help you with many aspects of your journey, including helping with your diet plan, setting goals and encouraging you along the way.

- **Dietician:** Dieticians are qualified professionals that specialise in nutrition. A dietician can help you to understand your body and to help prepare a meal plan that will fit your individual needs. Their goal is to help you eat healthier so you can lose weight. A dietician will also help you to determine how many calories you need to consume each day and to balance your intake of the various food groups that you should be eating from.
- **Personal Trainer:** A lot of people have never learned to exercise properly. A Personal Trainer is a qualified professional that studies human anatomy and exercises for different body parts. A Personal Trainer will push you to attain your physical fitness goals, create an exercise program for you and oversee your exercise routine in a gym, giving you both cardiovascular and strength based exercises to follow.

The main goal of a Personal Trainer is to see to it that you get fit and strong. A Personal Trainer will educate you on how to do exercises safely and effectively. Each individual has different needs and a Personal Trainer will customise a training program for you. Over the course of the weight loss process, both the Personal Trainer and the Dietician may give you advice in changing your diet and your workout routine as you begin to gain more muscle tone and increase your fitness level.

- **Friends and Family:** When starting your weight loss journey, you may want to let friends and family know what you are doing so that they can provide support. It helps to have people you trust to stand by you in your health and fitness endeavor. Organise a friend, or your spouse to keep you accountable. You will likely be more successful if you have someone to encourage you when you are working towards your goals and to help support you if you start to struggle. Then, when you do reach your final goal (or even mini goals throughout) you can celebrate your achievements with someone.

Chapter 10

Stress management



The greatest weapon
against stress is our
ability to choose one
thought over another

William James
Philosopher and Psychologist



Isn't this book about fitness and weight loss, not stress?

Stress and obesity – biological connection

Have you ever come across a morning when you didn't feel like making a healthy breakfast but felt like eating a pastry, doughnut or a dark chocolate? You were probably under stress.

1. Research findings show that when people are under stress, they are less likely to make healthy and smart food choices. They often go for comfort foods.

Comfort foods are those carbohydrates or sugary foods which are usually well gelled with a lot of fat and calories. These foods increase the levels of Serotonin in the body. Serotonin is a chemical that creates a feel good atmosphere for the mind.

2. Another direct link between stress and obesity is Cortisol. Cortisol is a hormone which is excessively released in times of chronic stress. Excess Cortisol creates a craving for sugars and fats. It also increases the appetite.
3. Neuropeptide Y is a molecule found in living cells. When under stress, this molecule is released through nerves and it has an ability to accumulate fat.



“A diamond is
just a piece of metal
that handled stress
exceptionally well”



How do I handle stress?

While it can be complex to handle stress, it's easy to ensure that stress is not impacting your weight. Here are a few tips:

1. Keep a standard portion size. Keep a tab on mind hunger and stomach hunger. Keep a standard snack portion bowl. That way, your calorie intake will not increase.
2. Don't wait until you become too hungry, otherwise you may overeat.
3. Eat healthy at all times. Munch something healthy like whole wheat crackers or almonds.
4. Keep a check on what you are eating. This way, you will have a diversion for your mind from the stress point.

In addition to these tips, start practicing yoga or meditation. Try and map a route as to where the stress begins. Find out what is causing your stress, so that the starting point can be addressed.

Weight loss – what you should never do

Dieting is a multi-million dollar industry where there are many fads that come and go. Nothing can beat regular exercise and a balanced and nutritional diet. You need to be careful about what products you choose, or what methods you decide to use, and not fall for something that may cause you harm. There are several do's and don'ts when it comes to weight loss and maintaining a healthy lifestyle that you should know about. Some of the don'ts:

- **Never starve yourself, fast, or go on a diet that has too few calories.** As mentioned previously, when you drastically cut calories to lose weight, you

will lose muscle mass and possibly cause major health risks. In the end, you gain all your weight back or probably more because of binge eating.

This method will lower your metabolism, the thing you actually want raised, and will cause a shift toward a higher percentage of body fat which increases your risk for metabolic syndrome and Type 2 Diabetes. It is advisable to eat a minimum of 100 calories daily, otherwise you will have a hard time getting all the nutrients you need, fueling activity and satisfying your hunger.

- **Avoid taking over-the-counter diet pills and taking supplements if you are unsure as to what their effects are.** These products are often hyped up by empty promises that do not deliver, and they can cause harm as they are often loaded with caffeine and diuretics.

These can cause you to become dehydrated and imbalance your electrolyte levels. Just because a product advertises it's made from all-natural ingredients it doesn't mean it is safe or healthy for you and these products can be expensive. It is safest to forgo over-the-counter supplements and to rely on eating a healthy and balanced diet for all your nutrients to lose weight.

- **Drop the detox and cleansing plans.** Cleansing your body to get rid of toxins is not necessary. Cleansing only causes weight loss from water loss and stools, and it can be dangerous. You run the risk of becoming dehydrated and having electrolyte imbalance. Losing large amounts of water, especially on top of fasting without medical advice can be risky. Your body is well designed and detoxifies itself on its own, so forcefully cleansing it out is not necessary and could cause serious complications.

Instead, you just need to be aware of what you are eating. Eat foods with plenty of fibre and drink a lot of water.

- **Stay away from all forms of purging.** There is no safe way to purge as it involves forcing yourself to vomit, chewing food and spitting it out and abusing laxatives. Purging can cause serious health conditions and is often the first step in developing an eating disorder.

The acid in your stomach is very strong, as it is meant to break down the food you eat. Repeatedly forcing it through your esophagus and mouth can cause erosion of the esophagus, mouth and tooth enamel. This increases the risk of certain cancers and tooth decay. You may also experience dehydration and an imbalance of electrolytes as a result of a loss of fluids.

Any form of purging is extremely dangerous and risky for your health – it is not a safe way to lose weight! If you have this condition, seek medical help immediately.

- **Don't be obsessive about over activity.** Extreme exercising or dieting can put you at risk for injury, cause severe wear and tear on your body and cause dehydration and electrolyte imbalance. You risk 'burn out' resulting in giving up training altogether.

Despite recommendations from health professionals, some people think extreme exercising is okay to do and will exercise beyond what is healthy and training controls their life.

Instead, do regular exercise for health benefits and to get relief from stress, which can cause the release of Cortisol which increases appetite and stimulates fat storage.

- **Do not use legal or illegal drugs for weight loss.** Using drugs that are not intended for weight loss can be dangerous. The risks with abusing drugs such as cocaine, speed, attention deficit disorder drugs, thyroid medicine and diabetic medications for weight loss outweigh any health benefits that you might get from the weight loss itself.

Risks include both physical and psychological addiction, social and financial problems, ruining your relationships, anxiety, headaches, stroke and heart, lung or kidney problems. Using any drugs for purposes that are not intended is highly discouraged because of the potential side effects.

- **Do not rely on tobacco use for weight loss.** Smoking has many identified health risks, yet some people use smoking for weight loss as nicotine has been shown to be an appetite suppressant. The risks from smoking outweigh any weight loss benefits, as smoking harms almost all the organs in your body.

Plus smoking causes cancer, cardiovascular, respiratory and other diseases and reduces the overall health of the smoker and if you do quit smoking, weight gain is often a side effect.

The more healthier approaches you use for your weight loss, health and fitness journey with a balanced diet and regular exercise, the more likely you will be to lose weight and maintain a life long healthy lifestyle.

The secrets of staying healthy forever

Everybody wants to live long and healthy lives; nobody wants to get sick or feel unhealthy or suffer from any severe diseases. Although we can't predict or prevent every situation in our lives, it is up to us to respond to these situations. There are many proactive actions we can take that will help us to live a healthy life.

- **Prevention and early detection is the first thing you should consider.** Most people dread going for a yearly physical and to the dentist every six months, but having a good doctor and dentist and attending regularly will help you to remain healthy.

Knowing your family history is also important as if there is a history of heart disease or cancer in your family, your doctor can undertake regular testing.

- **Love the people you are with.** Spend time with your spouse, children, other family members, friends and co-workers. Enjoy the time you spend with other people and maintain healthy friendships. These relationships contribute to leading a fulfilled life.
- **Get eight hours of sleep.** Many people find this difficult to do but it really is important to have enough sleep, to lead a happy and healthy life.
- **Find something you are good at.** We need to be do activities we enjoy and often these are things that we excel at. There is usually something that makes us feel good inside and can even be soothing and a stress relief.

Now you are ready to plan and start your weight loss journey. You don't need to buy into some fad diet, machinery or drinks. There is no quick fix as many advertisers would like you to believe. To take charge of your health, follow a healthy diet, increase your activity level and keep your mental health in check. Take time to assess your current lifestyle habits, sit down with your doctor and other professionals such as a nutritionist and a physical trainer, to develop a weight loss and fitness program that is designed especially for you.

Manage your stress – don't ignore it! Everyone has stressors of some kind, and it is important that you handle your stress so that it does not get out of hand.

When you are riddled with worry and stress it can make you physically sick. Daily walks can help clear your head, and make sure that you are not over-filling your agenda for each day or letting other's schedules dictate your day.

Find balance in your life. Don't try to take on too many projects at work or let work dominate. Find a balance so you are able to enjoy your leisure time and your friends and family.

Although financial times can be tough, it is still important to find time to spend with your family and friends and doing activities you enjoy.

The more healthier the approach you adopt for your weight loss and your health and fitness journey, with a balanced diet and regular exercise, the more likely you will be to lose weight and maintain a life-long healthy lifestyle.

I hope a bit of my story and different strategies that worked for me and other tools that I have learned from studying books, articles and magazine are useful for you.

Learning as much as you can about your body and how it operates, your family health history, and how to manage your physical and mental health will help you to keep healthy for many years to come. With as many advantages as there are to living a healthy lifestyle, if you are determined and can keep yourself motivated and focused on your goals, you will, with the proper amount of time, reach those goals. It takes hard work and determination, but like I did, you can do it too.

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RESOURCE GUIDE

Fitness Blender YouTube Channel: Excellent exercise programs for busy people who cannot find time to go to fitness club. They could exercise at home with more than hundreds of exercise programs created by Fitness Blender team

Website

www.fitnessblender.com

Stickk.com : A great resource that will make you commit to your goal. Create a commitment, put a monetary stake on your commitment and ask your family member, friend or even a charity that you despise to be recipient of your weekly or one off monetary stake if you didn't adhere to your commitment. You will get results with this resource.

Website

www.stickk.com

Exercise Prescription on the Internet (ExRx.net) : Another wonderful resource with exercise information, type of different muscle group exercises. Exercise library with more than 1600 exercises.

Website

www.ExRx.net

WebMD: WebMD is well known resource for health related information which publishes content regarding health, fitness and health care topics such as symptom checklist, drugs information, pharmacy information, blogs of specialists and doctors with specific topics.

Website

www.webmd.com

Nutrition Data: A good website for being aware and conscious on how many calories you are consuming. You can determine how many grams of protein and carbohydrates are in a particular food item. You could analyse the number of calories in a recipe. This website is a great resource for someone who wants to lose weight. With the help of nutrition data, they could be more mindful with their calories intake.

Website

www.nutritiondata.com

