



Get in the Right Mindset to Exercise Regularly

By Jessica Blaszcak

Getting in shape is not that difficult a resolution to keep. You just have to set your mind into goal-mode, and exercise will come naturally to you. Here are five simple steps in order to get into the right mindset to work out regularly. Remember, exercise not only makes you *look* better, but it makes you *feel* better, as well.

1. Set Realistic Expectations

Before you actually begin your new workout routine, set a goal for yourself. What exactly do you want to achieve—weight loss, toning, maintenance?

If you are new to exercise, do not overwhelm yourself. Try to stick to one small physical goal, and keep a list of objectives. When you set realistic expectations for yourself, you will be able to obtain them. Then, you may work on the more difficult objectives. It's that simple.

If you are considering joining a gym, many gyms have personal trainers available to help you set a goal for yourself. If you are uncertain about what you want to achieve, or even how to physically do so, personal trainers are key to improving your mindset. They will give you that extra push that you sometimes need to remain focused.

2. Find a Fitness Buddy

With eight out of 10 people possessing the same healthy resolution to get in shape, it shouldn't be too difficult to find yourself a friend to work out with. Studies show that when you work out with a fitness partner, you are more motivated to your workout routine. Whether you are simply having more fun while working out with a friend, or you feel more competitive and push yourself to the limit to be the best, depends on your personality. Either way, having a friend right by your side proves beneficial.

3. It Does Not Matter What You Do ...

... just do something! It does not matter if you cannot afford an expensive gym membership. Just because you do not have access to those state-of-the-art fitness machines, does not mean you cannot exercise efficiently. Exercise does not have to be formal. Run up and down your stairs 10 times a day. Take your dog outside for a jog, or even a quick jaunt, around the neighborhood. Anything that makes your heart beat faster and your body use oxygen more rapidly is a form of cardiovascular exercise. So, do not let anything discourage you from your ultimate fitness goals.

4. Eat Healthy

In order to become physically fit, working out is half the battle. You must eat a healthy diet to maintain a good fitness program. If you can afford it, consult a dietician for nutritional advice. A good dietician can tell you what foods to eat to compliment your workout and help you attain a leaner, healthy body. Remember, even though you may work out consistently, if you do not offer your body enough nourishment, all of your hard work will be for naught. A body needs to eat healthy in order to properly receive the benefits of exercise.

5. Have Fun!

You are not alone! There are millions of others who want to exercise on a regular basis, but find it difficult to stay motivated or interested. As physical as exercise is, the first step to any kind of exercise is your mental state. It is important to remember that you exercise, not to torture yourself, but to make yourself feel good. So, do things that you enjoy. For example, yoga is a wonderful way to cleanse your mind and become fit at the same time. Or, join a basketball league, and forget that you are actually exercising while having a great time! Also, free weights can be difficult to repeatedly lift, but think of that lovely burn you receive at the end.

If you begin your new workout routine with a negative attitude toward exercise, itself, you will not be able to work out regularly. Remind yourself that exercise can be fun. It feels awesome to work out.

Regular exercise has been associated with so many health benefits, it is surprising that not more people exercise on a daily basis. Studies show that exercise increase your life span, lowers blood pressure, reduces the risk of various cancers, and even enhances your mood. Once you begin your exercise routine, you will notice that your body not only looks better, but you will also have more energy to do the things you love.