

Exercise – are you ready to stop making excuses?

When asked to write an article on the reasons why people don't exercise, I smugly thought to myself that this would be a walk in the park. I'd offered myself a million excuses over the past twenty years and I felt certain I already knew them all. I certainly had a million more reasons why 'tomorrow' would be the defining moment that would set my fitness journey in motion and change my life forever. 7,300 tomorrows later, I am now only four months into that journey.

In order for my article to be reasonably accurate, I had to do some research. I began by interviewing people from all walks of life between the ages of 18 and 70 years. Next I sent my web browser into overdrive, reading any information on the issue I could get my hands on. I visited social sites, dieter's blogs, both health and government sites and many more that I can't even remember now.

It turns out that these are the top 10 reasons why we don't exercise regularly:

1. The overwhelming feeling of committing long term to regular exercise is exhausting in itself.
2. Busy lifestyle; it's difficult to find time to exercise.
3. Family commitments; I have small children, etc.
4. Fear; being too embarrassed to go to a gym because we are self-conscious of both our appearance and poor performance. (Personally, I feel this is a real issue, not an excuse. However, this too can be overcome with the right assistance).
5. Being young and healthy and not seeing the need for exercise or its benefits; or being too old.
6. When we stop exercising we lose the benefits anyway, so why start in the first place?
7. Don't like to sweat or ruin my hairstyle (this one did make me laugh ...).
8. Going to the gym is boring – running on a treadmill or riding an exercise bike, but going nowhere.
9. Can't stay motivated about exercising, and I feel more tired and sore after exercising anyway.
10. Monetary issue; gyms are too expensive

Hmmm any of these sound familiar?

I have to tell you that, while typing this list, I did feel a little pathetic (OK, maybe more than a little) knowing I used several of these excuses on a regular basis for so long. What took me so long to get going? I feel I've wasted so many years, but it's better to be a late bloomer than to have never bloomed at all, especially when it comes to exercising and improving your health and fitness.

If you too are tired of making excuses, you can put money on the fact that your husband, wife, best friend and work mates are all tired of listening to them. Is this really how you want to go through the rest of your life? Wouldn't you rather:

- Look in the mirror each day and love the body you see, instead of being envious of others.
- Feel fit and fabulous at any age.
- Have more energy to play with your children or just do the things you love.
- Be around long enough to see your children grow up and hopefully their children too.
- Run that marathon or whatever that you've always dreamed of, instead of admiring others from your couch.
- Take up that sport you've always wanted to play, instead of critiquing the game from the sidelines.
- Feel an improved sense of health and overall wellbeing.
- Have the confidence you gain through exercising and looking and feeling great.

“No more excuses”

1. Worrying about committing long term. Just begin with the first day, set yourself small goals, pick a time and just start, try and gain consistency though. for example (Day 1. 10 minutes, Day 2. 11 minutes, Day 3. 12 minutes.....)
2. Too busy? List your top 3 priorities (Your health, Your family, Your finances or work...), The most devoted people spend 2 hours per week on their health that's 30 minutes per day every second day. Then fit everything else around your priorities. Choose a time that you're most energetic.
3. Family commitments. What is more important than your health and your family's health? Rather than family commitments, commit to your family; make exercise your family commitment.
4. Fear of being embarrassed. Pick somewhere, where you are comfortable but remember that people are just concerned with themselves deep down it's your concern not theirs. We all exercise for similar reasons.
5. Not believing that you need to exercise. We are a spirit, a mind and a body, right? Ask yourself these 3 questions, What do I do to exercise my spirit, What do I do to exercise my mind and What do I do to exercise my body, if you cannot answer 1 of these questions you're out of balance its only a matter of time and you will tip the scales, why wait ?
6. When we cease exercising, we lose the benefits. Again take one day at a time, focus on the beginning and keep the wheel turning, the wheel has no beginning and no end. Exercise has no beginning and no end, just keep moving!
7. Don't like to sweat. Sweat is your body's mechanism to cool down, to function naturally it's a way your body cleans itself, cleaning is a part of our life and our bodies are good at it, let it do what it wants to do.
8. Going to a gym is boring? Focus on the purpose and nothing is boring and with the right guidance you can stay focused.
9. Can't stay motivated. Get inspired! Motivation is the fuel that fires your engine, define your purpose and you will have a direction to move towards.
10. Gyms are too expensive. Think of it as an investment and you will find it makes you money, the benefits out way the costs, if you feel good, you do more and if you do more, you feel good. Then nothing else matters!

If you have read this article, become the hero in your story. Focus on what is important YOU.

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