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Exercise in Your Life

by Johnny Nguyen

As trainers at FIT, we are exercise technicians, biomechanics nerds, workout geeks. We train hard and we train often. Most of us even like to think of ourselves as exercise bad-asses.

Training is what we do. While others make a living closing multi-million-dollar deals, transplanting hearts and chasing photons into the parallel universes of quantum mechanics, we are simply content with lifting a barbell and triggering a metabolic response for longevity and better health.

Exercise makes up a large part of our lives, but we also realize that this is not necessarily the case for many. We've been around long enough to know that people have other obligations and interest in life. For many, exercise remains only a small part of their lives, a chore no different than brushing teeth. And that's cool, too, as long as their bodies are as healthy as their smiles.

But we also know that many of you regard exercise as one of the most important things you do for yourselves. And you are very committed to making the positive change, and a lot of you have ultimately achieved it. This month Scott Kolasinski tells us in his article what you can do after achieving your health and fitness goals, so that you can maintain them for the long term. Still some of you are very committed but may have a lot of unintended road blocks, especially from those in your lives. Analisa visits this challenge in her article, the first in a series.

Then, we introduce, for the first time in our Monthly, an article written by one of our clients, Aurora Dreyer, who has successfully lost over 100 pounds of body fat. Through her article, we get inside her head for a glimpse of her personal struggles and success, and how she plans to keep the weight off.

I hope you enjoy reading these articles (and others) and get something from them, no matter how you view exercise in your life.

Maintaining Your Weight Loss

by Scott Kolasinski

Many tabloids and TV ads like to show-off a celebrity or "ordinary Joe" how they lost 40-50+ pounds on a certain diet plan. Those people should be congratulated. Anybody who has made a significant change to his/her body composition should certainly be awarded some props for the sacrifices and changes made in their life.

However, I am most impressed with those who have not only lost a significant amount of weight, but also maintained their weight loss. Those who have maintained their weight loss have truly made a lifestyle change. They have made their health a priority while maintaining all of the other challenges that life has delivered into their lives. And, these types of people are simply RARE: according to one study, approximately 95% of dieters will regain their weight loss within one year.

So, in order to tackle these poor attrition rates, a group of researchers developed the National Weight Control Registry (<http://www.nwcr.ws/>) (NWCR). The NWCR was developed to identify and investigate the characteristics of individuals who have succeeded at long-term weight loss. The NWCR is tracking over 5,000 individuals who have lost significant amounts of weight and kept it off for long periods of time. The NWCR's investigation is constantly ongoing. Anybody who has been successful at losing weight could be one of their subjects.

Thus far, the NWCR has concluded that those who have succeeded in maintaining their weight loss have these things in common:

- maintain a low calorie, low fat diet
- doing high levels of activity
- 78% eat breakfast every day
- 75% weigh themselves at least once a week
- 62% watch less than 10 hours of TV per week
- 90% exercise, on average, about 1 hour per day

There is no such thing as a one-size-fits-all diet. The above points can be adapted to fit anybody's lifestyle. As the Nutrition Consultant of FIT, it is my job to help everybody develop strategies to which they can adhere in their life. I will not tell you what you "can" and "cannot" eat or do necessarily, but there are healthier alternatives and ways of living.

But in the end, I will always tell you, the decision is up to you – I can only lead a horse to water. You have to make the decision to adhere to your healthier, fitter you. If you want to talk, I will listen.

What You're Doing is For YOU!

by Analisa Naldi

"Why do you get up so early to exercise?" "Are you really not staying out late tonight because you have to workout tomorrow?" "Oh, you're going to eat the healthy option on the menu, eh?" Ever heard this before? Even when said in jest, these words can cause us to second-guess ourselves, our dedication to our bodies, and our conscious decision to make healthier nutrition choices. Don't they understand why we want to be active, why we want to get stronger and have more energy, and why we want to eat the food that is better for us?

Who are these people, pressures, and forces that ask all of these questions? They are family members, spouses, colleagues, and even close friends. Social pressures and family support are two huge environmental factors that directly affect exercise and nutrition adherence. It is not uncommon for those of us who are regularly active, even consistently aware of our physical well being to be questioned, joked at, and even prodded at times regarding our choices. While these comments can be looked over, ignored, and laughed at, they can also be detrimental to maintaining a consistent exercise regimen and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Teacher educator Pat Sullivan suggests that those that tend to be the most successful at maintaining a regular exercise regimen are self-motivated. This generally includes a positive attitude towards physical activity, interest in a specific activity, and self-confidence. Let's be honest here for a second. This is a great expectation, but not necessarily realistic. Motivation, especially one geared towards health, exercise, wellness, and activity, is also generated from external sources. These sources can include family, friends, co-workers, and life-altering situations. Knowing that the majority of us feed off of both, how much of an impact can the external sources have on the internal motivation?

Family support is essential to success. This includes your "significant other" understanding the prioritization of exercise, activity and healthy choices. It also includes educating and inclusion of children, close friends and extended family. If the rest of the family sees one member participating in a regular exercise regimen, experiencing success, and enjoying the journey, then they are more apt to want to follow suit. On the other hand, if they aren't supportive, they don't understand, or simply don't want anything to do with it, please don't give up! A common roadblock to continuous exercise is the sacrifice of family time. The inclusion of a steady workout regimen should not mean that relationships deteriorate. Taking a walk after dinner, playing family games, or coaching an organized sport are all ways to include family and exercise at the same time.

Alternatively, how much do they all actually know about your exercise regimen? Part of human nature is fear of the unknown. Take the time to sit down and explain to your spouse, kids, friends and/or colleagues what your workouts entail. Explain the exercises, how to do them, what you like and/or don't like about them. Ask them to workout with you!

With regards to nutrition choices that you make, educate them on your goals and why you're eating what you're eating. Encourage them to try new things with you, taste unconventional foods, and/or prepare food together. Cooking and planning meals saves money, enables you to make healthier choices, creates additional time together, while stimulating conversation and promoting an informal nutrition education.

While it is important to maintain a regular exercise regimen, it is essential to remember that exercise is an element of a healthy, balanced, lifestyle. The balance includes exercise, nutrition, family and friends, and a career. A safe, consistent, exercise routine includes internal and external motivation, social support, and a willingness to take one day and one goal at a time.

Instead of asking yourself why they don't understand, or why they are not supportive, try asking what you can do to help educate them and help them support you? What can you share with them so that they understand your passion for physical activity? How can you contribute to their knowledge of exercise, health, and nutrition?

Remember that you are exercising and making choices for your own personal health and well-being. Take one day at a time. Take one goal at a time. Celebrate the small victories along the way and know that eventually they will come around. And, if they don't, remember that you are working out and eating healthily so that you can live a longer life.

Enjoy your days. Kick ass in your workouts. And don't forget to live along the way.

*Sullivan, Pat. Exercise Adherence. ERIC Digest. (1991). ERIC Clearinghouse on Teacher Education Washington DC. ED 330676.

How I Lost over 100 Pounds, Got Fit, and My Plan to Stay that Way

by Aurora Dreyer, FIT Client

On December 31, 2006, I was a happy 33 year old wife, mother of 3 beautiful daughters, gainfully employed and surrounded by fantastic friends. Even with all these gifts, I was unhappy and had a sense of being unfulfilled. I was Fat. Yes, with a capital F. As in 265 pounds. I have trouble saying or writing that "F" word, even now, more than a year later. I knew I was Fat, but had lulled myself into a false sense of security with it because I was also "funny, smart and had a big heart". Not everyone can be in great shape, right?

Then something happened that made me painfully aware of how important getting and keeping your body healthy really is. One of my best friends got very sick with cancer and I watched her battle this disease. She was very strong and fit, and because she had worked so hard at being in good physical condition, her body and mind together were able to beat the hell out of breast cancer. Watching her made me realize that I too had a battle ahead of me in order to take back control of my body, but that if she was strong enough to do it while literally fighting for her life, then what exactly was stopping me from getting off my butt and you know, just moving my limbs??

So, it began in the pitch dark and rainy 6:00 am hour, three days per week at Rancho San Antonio, armed with flashlights and my best friends. It didn't begin with Rocky-esque theme music or looking hot in Lulu pants. To begin with, I was able to only walk around two miles at a fairly slow pace. Those first few weeks were cold, I couldn't breathe and it totally sucked getting up at 5:15 in the morning. Then I got on the scale

after a week or so and my weight had come down 8 pounds! Now, I didn't look thinner and I knew it was a ton of water weight, etc... but STILL! The scale had gone DOWN for the first time in years. That opened up a whole new world of "What can I do to make this go even faster?" The most obvious answer was that if I am hauling my ample behind out of bed every morning at 5:15 am; I better really make it worthwhile by eating differently. I didn't dare say the word diet to myself-simply "eating differently".

I knew I didn't want to attend Rah Rah group meetings, hang out with Jared at Subway, inhale Trimspa and bleach my hair, or starve myself with chalky liquids. I did a lot of research online about LA Weight Loss, Weight Watchers and the like. In the end, I followed a simple plan of my own design. Eat Less of Everything All the Time. I established a calorie maximum of 1400 per day. I did not cut out any food groups entirely, but cut WAY back on sugar, carbs and alcohol. I ate three meals per day and two snacks with my last food item of the day being eaten by 7 pm. Lean Cuisines and fresh fruit were life savers; along with popcorn and sugar free fudgesicles. I'm not gonna lie, there were days when I was hungry and irritable and just wanted to eat. I did something else instead, like window-shopping for the clothes I wanted to buy when I could fit into them, or read a book, or, as usual, talked my head off on my cell phone. I learned not to rely on food as activity, but only as fuel.

As spring and summer of 2007 rolled around, my early morning sojourns had become jogging 4 miles instead of walking 2, and the pounds were melting away. I lost 60 pounds in the first 6 months with just cardio and eating less. Other important milestones were marked during this time, like buying clothes in regular stores and being able to go on amusement park rides with my daughters. You don't realize how devastating it is to miss these things until you are able to do them.

In spring of 2007, I was convinced that I was ready for weight training. I was terrified. My very first weight training experience was with FIT's trainer Jimmy at 6 am on a Friday morning with three others. It wasn't so bad! In fact, it was another challenge I felt ready to tackle and I started going every Friday. I would look around FIT and see people performing incomprehensible feats. Women doing pull-ups? Scott doing something called a muscle-up and Johnny jumping onto on a really tall box? I soon realized that they all weren't born with the ability to do these amazing things. They worked really hard to master them. Why couldn't I?

As I incorporated weight training into my regular cardio and continued to drop pounds, I also gradually decreased my calorie total per day. In the summer of 2007, I was eating around 1200 per day. I started doing Crossfit at FIT a few days per week, in addition to a few days of running and one of strength training. I was now exercising 5 or 6 days per week, down about 75 pounds, and looking and feeling wonderful.

My first plateau came in the fall. My eating had become so regimented and my body had gotten so efficient at the same exercises and intensity levels that it seemed I was just coasting. Yes, I had reached the magical "100 lbs", was technically "fit", but, darn it, knew I could be even more so. What to do? I couldn't eat any less and was already working out more than enough.

Further inspiration came from a nutritional consultation with FIT's own Scott Kolasinski. He pointed out that, yes, I was working hard, met an initial goal and was eating well, BUT wasn't pushing my workout intensity enough and that I was ready to fine-tune where my calories were coming from. I was eating the correct calorie levels, but needed to focus on their source. More lean protein, more plant-based carbs and less fat. With that knowledge and advice, I started doing everything amped-up a notch. More weight lifting, even faster, with less rest and sometimes two workouts a day, just to see what would happen and what I was capable of accomplishing. Again, additional inches melted away and I accomplished my goal of an additional 10 pound loss.

Being fit and staying that way is the pursuit of finding what it means to be "fit," and I'm proud to say that I haven't reached it yet...maybe I will, one real pull-up and one handstand push-up at a time. Single-leg broad jump burpees, anyone? Jimmy?

My future plan to stay fit is simple: don't eat any food unless it serves a purpose (and that DOES include wine and chocolate occasionally!) and continue to have this conversation with all of my trainers and friends.

"You saw or heard of someone that can do WHAT?"

"Oh yeah, I'm SO going to do that, too... but FASTER!"

FIT Client of the Month, June 08: Gary Sheerer

Name: Gary Sheerer

Age: 61

FIT member since: 8/1/05

Goal: Initially, to get in better shape, lose some weight, regain some muscle strength. As of 1/1/06, to see if I could get back into the pool and not drown or ruin my shoulder while joining some old friends to play in the World Masters Water Polo Championships. Since then, building on the success and positive results.

Results: First five months: Gained some strength, didn't lose weight. However, the training to date enabled me to be able to agree to try to play water polo again (which I had no plans whatsoever to do). From January 2006 to now I have lost 25 pounds while gaining strength, and doing so without re-injuring my shoulder (I had surgery 25 years ago due to repeated dislocations). The personal training has been carefully structured to build strength and endurance, while regaining some flexibility. Prior to that, I was unwilling to risk the wrong movements out of concern for my shoulder. Interestingly, a number of my teammates (who started with relatively healthy shoulders) have had shoulder problems in the past year (a relatively common event for that sport). So, my training has been especially helpful!

Likes: The variety and tailor-made workouts; the results of being pushed to do more than I would do on my own.

Dislikes: I'm not saying, since I know you'll make me do it!

PR 500 meter row: 147.1PR chin-ups: Trying to catch up with his wife Ann!

Key to success: The key to Gary's success has been his commitment to his workouts both in and out of FIT. Not only does Gary rarely miss a session, he always walks thru the doors of FIT ready to give one hundred percent regardless of any aches and pains or bruises from being kicked in water polo practice the night before. Two years ago, when Gary started at FIT, he set a few common goals for himself including basic strength and weight loss. After a couple months of training at FIT, his goals quickly grew to training for the Master's Water Polo tournament at Stanford the following year. Since then, Gary has committed himself to two days a week of training at FIT, multiple nights per week at polo practice with his fellow teammates, as well as swimming and throwing the ball around on his own. Gary and his wife, Ann, have a lot to celebrate as they both just returned from Australia competing in water polo, swimming, and diving. Congratulations to both Gary and Ann on their commitment and dedication to achieving their fitness goals!

In Gary's Words: I have told many people that the past two years have been among the best in memory for me...quite a statement. This is due to the camaraderie, physical and mental benefits of getting together with old friends, and some new ones, to pursue a love of water polo that I had left long ago. Had I not begun the journey with several months of personal training, I would have had no choice but to turn down the commitment to get back in the water after so long. The weight loss, increased energy and feeling of well-being have been great as well.

I have just returned from the World Masters Aquatics Championships in Perth, Australia, where I competed in two different age groups, and played 13 games in 7 days. Our team won the Gold Medal. Two years ago, I could not have even imagined the

possibility of doing this. My personal training at FIT has been the cornerstone of my overall regimen. My wife, Ann (also a FIT client), won two medals in Perth also (in swimming and diving), and we are both looking forward to continuing our journey at the 2010 World Masters in Sweden.

FIT Kid Spotlight, June 2008: Eric Arteaga

Name: Eric Arteaga

School: Livingston High School

Current sports: Football, Wrestling, Weightlifting for Team FIT

How long have you been working out and lifting weights?

I have been lifting since 7th grade. It wasn't until I entered high school that I realized what lifting was really like. Now, getting into Olympic lifting, everything has changed. I feel better and stronger. I feel like I can do anything.

What are your personal records in the Olympic-style lifts?

Clean and Jerk: 100kg (220 lbs.)

Snatch: 71kg (156.2 lbs.)

Combined Total: 171kg (376.2)

Why is working lifting important to you?

Lifting is important to me because it gives me personal strength and self-confidence. These two things are very important for any sport I play. It will also help me in life because I will know what hard work is really like.

What has it done for your life?

Olympic-style lifting has been a big change for me. It is different from all of the other lifts that I do. I actually look forward everyday to lifting with my partners and coach.

What are the keys to your success? Why do you believe you have been successful?

My keys to success are all the coaches I have. My main coach or favorite would be Ms. Naldi (Luciana) because she has pushed me to become a better athlete and she believes in me. I believe that I am also successful because I want it more than others.

What does your family think of your lifting?

At first my parents didn't want me to lift; they didn't really understand why or what I was doing. They didn't want me to get hurt. Once they saw me lift, it changed the way they thought, especially because they saw how much I enjoy lifting.

What are your future goals for weightlifting or sports?

My future goals for sports and weightlifting would be to continually improve at whatever sport I choose to play. Also when I go to college, I want to come back and coach others how to lift.

The Box Jump

by Johnny

The box jump exercise has many benefits:

- Power output
- Explosive extension of the hips, knees and ankles
- High relative caloric expenditure
- Quick feet

- Reactive strength
- Agility
- Increased bone density

The box jump exercise is truly a whole-body exercise because it involves all the major muscle groups, including legs, hips, shoulders, arms, back and abdominals. The box jump can generally be divided into four phases. Below is a brief description of each phase:

The Dip

The first phase is the dip. During the dip, downward force is created to essentially load the legs. This increases stored elastic energy as well as stimulates a greater rate of muscular contraction during the drive.

The Reversal

Between the dip and the drive is, naturally, the reversal (also called the amortization phase). A faster, more abrupt reversal is desirable. The duration of the reversal is influenced by several factors, but in general it can be quickened through jump training, building an athletic quality useful in sports and in an active life.

The Drive

In the drive, the lower body extends powerfully in what is called a "triple extension," a natural movement pattern found in many sporting activities, as well as in general physical activities such as running, hopping, jumping, cutting and other quick maneuvers involving the legs. The arms also drive upward, helping to improve the velocity of muscular contraction in the upper limbs and shoulders. The back and abdominal muscles contract forcefully to maintain jumping posture and torso stabilization.

The Landing

This phase teaches landing mechanics in which the timing of joint actions must be precise to absorb the impact. This improves agility. The impact also helps to build or maintain bone density.

FIT Nutrition Guidance Services * Healthy FIT Recipe

If you are serious about losing weight, FIT Nutrition can help. We offer several service levels depending on the degree of guidance and accountability you need. FIT Nutrition includes one-to-one consultations, practical nutritional recommendations, integration with your fitness goals and accountability through email and in-person correspondence. This is NOT a one size fits all diet - this is a lifestyle change that will lead to sustainable weight loss and a more FIT you.

Levels of service

1/2 hour consultations:

Member = \$55

Non-Member = \$69

Basic

Member = \$200

Non-member = \$250

One 1 hour session

One 30 min consult 1 week post visit

Email of notes from first visit

Body Fat analysis

Pre-made list of Dietary tips

Premier Program

Member = \$500

Non-Member = \$650

Two 1 hour sessions

- one, 1-hour session after goal weight/body fat percentage has been achieved to discuss maintenance of body weight.

Four 30 min consults
- recommend one 30-min session one week after goal has been achieved.
One month of weekly email reminders while achieving goal weight.
Email of notes from first and second visit
BF% + 1 follow-up
Dietary tips

Premier Plus Program
Member = \$1,000
Non-Member = \$1,250
4 1-hour sessions
- recommend 2 consultations prior to achieving goal
Eight 30 min consults
- recommend 3 consultations after achieving goal weight.
Three months of weekly email reminders
Email of notes from 1-4 visits
Suggested Menu
BF% + 2 follow-ups
Dietary tips

GRILLED TUNA WITH OLIVE RELISH

ACTIVE TIME: 25 MINUTES
TOTAL TIME: 25 MINUTES
PREPARED AHEAD: Olive relish can be made up to 1 hour ahead

**Pay attention once you've put the tuna on the grill. Although it is considered a fatty fish (and has PLENTY of heart-healthy omega-3's), tuna dries out when it is over-cooked.

OLIVE RELISH

1/2c finely chopped fresh parsley
1/3c chopped pitted imported black olives, such as kalamata
1/4c finely chopped celery
1 small clove garlic, minced
1/2 tsp dried oregano
1 tbsp lemon juice
1 tsp extra-virgin olive oil
1/8 tsp salt
Freshly ground pepper to taste

GRILLED TUNA

1 3/4 lb tuna steak, cut, trimmed, into 6 servings
1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
1/4 tsp salt
Freshly ground pepper to taste
Lemon wedges for garnish

TO PREPARE OLIVE RELISH: Combine parsley, olives, celery, garlic, oregano, lemon juice, oil, salt and pepper in small bowl.

TO GRILL TUNA: Preheat grill to medium-high. Rub tuna all over with oil and season with salt and pepper. Grill the tuna until seared on both sides and just cooked through, approximately 4 minutes per side. Serve with olive relish and lemon wedges.

MAKES 6 SERVINGS. PER SERVING:
184 CALORIES
5G FAT (1G SAT, 3G MONO)
1G CARBOHYDRATE
31G PROTEIN
1G FIBER

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