

## Embrace a NEW ATTITUDE about your health, starting NOW! The 'Start Small' Approach to *Finally Fitting In Fitness*

Physical activity is one of those things that everyone *thinks* about doing, but few people actually do with regularity and, if your busy life transpires against your efforts to get fit, you're not alone. As a nation, we're having trouble '*fitting in fitness*'. Statistics estimate that 63% of Canadians are sedentary, or not exercising at an adequate level to maintain health. If you're among them, you likely know what's stopping you. A Health Canada survey reports that individuals between the ages of 18 and 59 list lack of time, energy, and motivation as their top three reasons for not exercising.

**No surprise there!** Lack of time is the biggest culprit, as our busy schedules transpire against us, and exercise gets put off yet again. Why? *Lack of time* eats up our motivation and energy. In the daily rush from one commitment to the next, *energy* drains. As energy approaches nil, the last thing a busy person feels like doing is *getting motivated* to find **time** to do physical activity. Since the daily "to do" list is endless, it guarantees that lack of time will always be an issue...and thus the circle remains unbroken. "*So, when do I take care of myself?*"

### The 'All or Nothing' Problem

So many new and unmotivated exercisers wait for inspiration to do it all and do it right, and in the process do *nothing*. You may have the ambition to reach the next level yet set yourself up for failure by creating unrealistic expectations of yourself and your available time. If you want to exercise but seem to waste time, procrastinate, wait for better circumstances, more time, more energy, or more knowledge, you may be suffering from 'The All or Nothing *Exercise Problem*'. *I'll get to it when...I'll get to it when...I'll get to it when...*

How truthful are you about your efforts to realistically *fit in fitness*? You tell yourself "I'm pumped to lose 20 pounds in 2 months" but your schedule will only *realistically* allow you to exercise twice a week right now. You say "Well, I'll get up at 5:30am and workout *before* work." But you know you're not a morning person so it's not likely to bring success. You lament that you used to be so *fit* without acknowledging that your career has grown and your available time for hanging out at the gym has decreased. You *swear* you'll do whatever it takes to get back to 'pre-baby' weight, but with two toddlers at home, your time and energy have vanished. As our lives change, we need to adjust with the times – not *forever*, just for now. Isn't it better that you exercise at least twice a week *today* rather than waiting to exercise your ideal three to four times *later*? Isn't 10 minutes of *doing* better than the hour you were *thinking* of doing? **What would happen if you just got started?**

The reality is success in fitness requires some effort from you. The first step to a higher level of personal fitness and health is creating the **habit**. Whether you're just starting out or working to a new level, set your goals and make a realistic plan for how you will get there based on the available time in your schedule TODAY.

This is a tough one since we're driven by *results*, and it's true, they're slower to materialize if we're not exercising as much. Even still, we have to habituate exercise before we can build on it. If your busy schedule allows for less exercise than you're used to, then start with less ... **just start**. If you start small, you'll be less overwhelmed by the changes, and as the exercise habit solidifies, you *will* find more time, energy, *and* motivation for the next level.

You must chart your course and follow it – even in small steps – and this will eventually bring you results. Whether you're exercising, running a business, maintaining a household, raising

children, pursuing an education, time issues will prevail, and if you're one of those people who continues to wait for the *more of it* to materialize it may be *time* to change your plan of attack. Remember, you don't need *hours* to change the outcome, you just need to **get started**.

Fitness is *indeed* a life-long commitment but it needn't be overwhelming. Plan for three honest exercise efforts each week, then knock them down one at a time. If your schedule allows it, include Monday as your first effort so you experience success (and cross off one exercise effort) early in the week.

*Rather than* “**put it off**” until tomorrow, make a decision to use today as an opportunity to “**add on**” an effort at physical activity.

Remember, don't overwhelm yourself with the idea that you have to 'go big' to make an impact. No matter if you're starting from scratch or have been moderately active and want to add on a bit more effort, your weekly physical activity goal is still the same ...

### ***Do more than what is normal for YOU.***

If you're currently not exercising, then more *isn't much*. Habituate 10 minutes per day or 30 minutes 3 times per week. If you're already successful with 2 exercise sessions per week, try to add in a third, or make your current sessions a bit more intense. Add on small bits, get used to the changes they bring on, then add or change again as your body tells you it's ready. No matter what you decide, simply *get started*. Before long you will have habituated a new level of health and fitness for yourself, through a 'start small' approach that really works!

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Life Balance *is* possible, even with your busy schedule! Michelle makes you think, laugh, and implement REAL change. With a Masters in Kinesiology, a BA in Psychology, and a specialization in Health and Exercise Psychology, Michelle not only walks her talk in life balance and fitness, but she knows a lot about it! She takes that credibility seriously in an industry where *anything goes*. She has built her career since 1990, as a college educator, personal trainer, fitness coordinator, and author. As a professional speaker, she shares her experiences in a humorous and realistic way with delighted audiences across North America. Michelle knows her energy has fueled her business success! Today, through her seminars and products, she helps people overcome big challenges through a start small solution that really works!