

Goals For The New You

Timing is never “right” to achieve any health or wellness goal. If you are content to wait until all conditions are optimal, you’ll wait forever. Find the circumstances you want, or make them. When you resolve to make healthy lifestyle changes as quickly as possible, conditions work for you rather than against you.

DEFINING SUCCESS

What is a “worthy ideal?” Nightingale’s definition hasn’t been blurred by the passing decades; whether a goal is a “worthy ideal” is something only you can decide. What is a “worthy” fitness or health goal to one person may be worthless to another. Apply the litmus test of your own values system.



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The Fitness Five

The process of adopting a healthy lifestyle is a series of signposts on the change continuum; as you focus on wellness, you are changing from who you are to who you want to become. To succeed, you must identify the signposts.

Reversing Challenges

Look back to your list of *Challenges to Overcome*. Identify the five most critical challenges on your list, then reverse them so that the challenges become objectives. For example, suppose one of your challenges is finding time for exercise. Reverse the challenge to create a health goal. In this example, you might write:

I will exercise at least 45 minutes three times per week.

Another example: One of your challenges might involve keeping close watch on what you eat. You might write:

I will purchase a reliable calorie counter and use it for every meal.

Turn your top five *Challenges to Overcome* into a *Fitness Five* – five signposts along which you can begin to build a healthy lifestyle. The items on your *Fitness Five* list become the clarion calls for personal change. As you make progress on your wellness journey, you may look back upon your *Fitness Five* as the point at which you changed your life.

NOTES

Defeating Cell Memory

Eating healthy food in the correct portions is not hard, once you know how to do it!

Your body and mind will respond very well when you've purged the wrong foods from your diet and replaced them with the healthy choices – foods eaten the right way at the right time and in the right quantity.

Healthy living is a cell memory retraining process that can be achieved by anyone willing to learn.

On the other hand, relying on folklore training, traditions, and advertising thwarts all attempts at defeating cell memory.



Getting Into Action

If we gather all the psychologists in the world into a single room, we might arrive at a universal truth:

People do things to gain a benefit or avoid a loss.

Only you can calculate the benefits to be gained from any *Fitness Five* item. Benefits are motivators; by knowing what you stand to gain, you can motivate yourself to take action.

At the end of this Segment is a *Getting Into Action* worksheet – an opportunity for you to “actionize” every item on your *Fitness Five* list. To transform an item on your *Fitness Five* list from a daydream into tangible reality, these steps are required:

Set an action date ... a day to begin. Why not today?

Summarize the benefits you will gain or

Knowing what you stand to gain, you can motivate yourself to take action.

Only you can calculate the benefits to be gained from any Fitness Five item.

the losses you will avoid.

Develop strategies to overcome any logistical hurdles.

For example: Where will you exercise? When? For how long? How will you pay for the equipment or club membership?

The final step on your *Getting Into Action* worksheet helps you weigh benefits and costs to determine if your objective is worthwhile. If it is, get into immediate action. If you decide an item on your *Fitness Five* list is not worthwhile, replace it with something you can wholeheartedly support.

Assessing the Cost

While every item on your *Fitness Five* list carries with it the promise of some benefit or reward, each also has some sort of cost attached. Unlike business or personal goals, the cost of achieving a wellness goal often cannot be measured by money. Indeed, money is seldom a factor in achieving a fitness

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Self-Talk: Affirming Your Success

Affirmations may make you feel slightly uncomfortable. If you are 50 pounds overweight, for example, you may feel ... well, silly when you tell yourself "I weight 175 pounds."

The sense of discomfort is normal; affirmations work by process of displacement. Each time you repeat an affirmation, you are displacing an old, negative attitude with the reality you wish to create.

Affirmations only work if they are used; overcoming any embarrassment is a critical first step toward making daily affirmations a lifelong success habit. Keep in mind that no one else needs to read or hear your affirmations but you.

goal. The real cost of developing a healthy lifestyle can be measured in time, effort, energy, material and relationships.

Any long-term lifestyle change demands an ongoing expenditure of *time*. Just how much time your healthy lifestyle will require may not be something you can accurately estimate at the outset. But pay careful attention to time demands as they become more evident. Early estimates of time required to exercise, plan meals and change eating habits can be deceiving. As you begin to turn challenges into wellness goals, you will develop a more realistic idea of the time required.

You may be tempted to abandon a item on your *Fitness Five* list because you are unwilling to spend the time required to achieve it. Unless you can substitute an item with an equal or greater health benefit, abandoning an item is almost always a mistake. Remember: We find time to do the things which are important.

Effort is belief in yourself; personal energy manifested to make something happen. Again, the amount of effort required to develop a healthy lifestyle is not always clear at the outset. Until you can see viable results from each item on your *Fitness Five* list, you must assume that the benefits to be gained are worth the effort involved.

Energy, like time, is a finite quality; individuals with "boundless energy" don't really exist. Unlike time, however, energy can be renewed. Energy is the measure of your willingness to pursue your dreams. A young adult, for example, may have very high energy. But your energy level tends to wane as you grow older.

Material refers to any physical element – exercise equipment or a fitness club membership, for example.

Finally, achieving a healthy lifestyle is impossible without making use of *relationships*. You've heard the old saying: It's not what you know that counts, but *who*. Friends and relatives may be required to put forth effort, energy or material help of some kind. Such requirements often take a toll on relationships, but wellness goals often cannot be accomplished without the help of others.

Monitoring Your Progress

Tracking your progress allows you to dedicate the right amount of time and energy to the achievement of any wellness goal. Tracking progress also helps you maintain self-motivation; when you see your goal drawing closer, you are willing to put forth the time and energy required to finish the task.

A calendar is the most common tracking tool. Track time spent exercising, track your weight, track how far you run or walk

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Idea: "Forever Goals"

One or two items on your Fitness Five list may represent "forever goals." A "forever goal" is a milestone to celebrate for an achievement that will require a lifetime.

For example, suppose you want to maintain your weight at a specific point. One of your Fitness Five goals might be to weigh the same year after year. As you reach that milestone each year, you can examine your healthy lifestyle and begin to plan for the achievement of the next anniversary ... and the next.

Creating Achievement Plans for "forever goals" can be a difficult process. Often, the process of planning requires you to think decades ahead. Remember that "progressive realization" allows you to be just as successful this year as you will be when you reach your goal.

... then compare your progress day-to-day or week-to-week. Any fitness goal that must be accomplished in weekly increments – a weight-loss goal, for example – can be tracked using an ordinary calendar. Break your goal down into minimum weekly requirements for success, then track your results.

Methods for tracking progress are limited only by your ingenuity. Use a calendar or create a unique tracking method for each *Getting Into Action* worksheet. Tracking your progress may seem time-consuming and elaborate, but it gets easier with practice. The benefits of tracking are substantial; few practices can produce the same motivation or drive to achieve as your own record of the progress you are making.

The Greatest Challenge

For most people, moving from planning into action is the greatest challenge of a healthy lifestyle. If you are motivated by the end result, getting into action will be easy. But if you are unsure of the benefits to be gained, sensitive to the negative input of others, or unwilling to put forth effort, energy, time and money, then moving toward your wellness objective will probably prove difficult.

The words of John Dretschmer are hardly cheering, but they are often true:

Upon the plains of hesitation bleach the bones of countless millions, who when

on the dawn of victory paused to rest, and there resting died.

Don't let this fate befall you. You have come too far, you have sacrificed too much to disdain your future now. Too many people depend upon your choice to adopt a healthful lifestyle. Today can be a red-letter day in your life, because today is the day you decide to transform your wellness dreams into specific action aimed at achieving specific results.

What are you waiting for? Get going!

Remember to read or listen to this Segment once a day for at least five days. Listening with spaced repetition helps you incorporate the concepts presented here. Complete the exercises at the end of the Segment before your next coaching session.

NOTES

Fitness Five

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Getting into Action

My Health and Wellness Objective:

When I'll Begin:

What obstacles will I encounter?

What benefits will I gain?

How will I overcome the obstacles I've listed?

Am I willing to put forth the time, effort, energy and money that will be needed to reach this goal? What else will this objective require?

Yes

No

Maybe
