

On Fitness: Find Your Purpose and Settle in for the Rewarding Ride to Fitness

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Woody Allen once said, "80 percent of success in life is showing up." I would argue the same goes for fitness.

Simply sitting on the couch and wishing for a better body, more energy and endurance, more libido and quality health sure aren't going to make it all happen. And going all out for one month of the year doesn't offset 11 months of being stagnant, either. You need to take action - consistent action. Think marathon - not sprint.



Results take time -the goal is longevity.

Besides, what's the hurry anyway? "I HAVE TO LOSE 20 POUNDS IN 3 WEEKS!" Why? Are you going to die in three weeks - and want to look smoking hot in your casket? Do you think you get to quit once you get where you want to be?

I've got news for you: There is no finish line in this. It's not a race. It's about expansion. Think of it more as a high jump. We don't set the bar at 2 feet, successfully jump the bar and think we've made it. We continue raising the bar. Seriously - let go of the idea of being done. It really is about the journey, not the destination in this circumstance. And, ultimately, what you'll come to find is the journey is much more gratifying than any destination you originally had in mind.

But first, let me ask you a question: What motivates you? And for the love of God, please don't say, "To lose weight." Losing weight is simply a byproduct of the



process. I'm not trying to discard its importance and I respect that it's a hot button for most people. It can drive you for a little while, but there will always be a deeper part of you left unfulfilled. Even if you do hit your goal weight, you're left with, "Now what?" Or even worse - the fear of the weight coming back.

The reality is, as humans we always want more for ourselves. Fitness isn't any different. Complacency has no foundation to keep us going. But finding your true purpose will. And then you'll feel no reason for haste. You'll become engulfed in the process and release your attachments to what you thought you were after originally. Then, seemingly, it all magically comes together - body, mind, purpose, continual expansion and belief in yourself.

So, what's my advice to you? Go inward. Be still. Be quiet. And ask: Why? Why am I doing this? What is my purpose? What do I truly want out of this? And lastly, be patient. It may take a day, a week, a year, a lifetime. But never stop searching. The answer is there - but you have to ask first.

Enter my client and friend Bryan Wheeler. Like most, Bryan's purpose in working out was wanting to "lose weight." Gym membership - check. Steady mix of cardio and weight - check. Boredom beginning to set in - check. It wasn't until 2005 when his mother-in-law invited him to do a triathlon that things began to shift. To be more specific, getting beaten by your mother-in-law can create a spark.

"It was a humbling experience losing. I dabbled in other types of exercise but found that training for endurance events was more rewarding. The triathlons have helped with the boredom, have created a fun bonding experience by participating with friends and family, have made new friends, and even inspire current friends with their goals." Since 2005, Bryan has competed in more than 20 endurance events, which include seven Ragnar Relays, several (He can't recall an exact number - awesome!) half and full marathons and seven triathlons. He is currently training for the Half Ironman this June.

And guess what? A funny thing happened along the way. Bryan lost weight. He began at 250 pounds in 2005 and weighs 180 pounds today. And you know why? He kept showing up. It didn't happen overnight. In fact, Bryan only averaged 0.7 pounds of weight loss per month. How many people do you think would give up on a strict "weight loss only" quest at that rate? Thousands? Millions? Doesn't seem too inspiring from that standpoint, does it? You have to remember days turn to weeks, then months, then years, to a lifetime. Slow and steady results - just like a marathon.

Bryan's just like you. He battled with self-criticism, negative self-image and defeatist self-talk. His metamorphosis came over time with small victories and surrounding himself with positive supportive people to re-program himself to the person he is today.

The moral? Find a deeper purpose.

And it doesn't have to be just like Bryan's story. I'm not saying go out and become a triathlete. I'm saying explore beyond the scale. Try new activities. Take up hiking, mountain biking, skiing. Join a sports league. Get into martial arts. Search - for as long as it takes.



And make your own story. Be an inspiration to someone, too. Your friends, your family, your kids, your neighbors. If you do, there are no words to describe the magnitude of the impact you'll have on everyone around you.

The weight loss is just the added bonus.

Now, are you ready to keep showing up?

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