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HOMEFIT



A HEALTH AND FITNESS GUIDE FOR THE SUPER BUSY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Intro	2
<hr/>	
Fail to Plan, Plan to Fail	4
<hr/>	
Resilience Practices for Less Stress	11
<hr/>	
Rest is Best	18
<hr/>	
Fuel With a Purpose	25
<hr/>	
Foundational Exercise Routine	33
<hr/>	
Flex Yourself	40
<hr/>	

INTRODUCTION



First of all, thank you for taking the time! Not just the time to download our infopacked eBook, but taking the time for yourself! If you're new to HOMEFIT, one thing I can say is that we get it! We understand that your lifestyle is busy beyond belief. That you're constantly having to put everyone else above yourself due to the never-ending demands and responsibilities. That (to be honest) the more you hear someone say, "You have to take care of yourself," the more frustrated you actually get.

Within our first year of business we quickly realized that there are thousands of other busy professionals out there just like you. A daily "To-Do List" that in reality is a Master List that's achieved in a today. Maybe you have a family, significant other, or constituents that are constantly pulling on your energy and demands.

And at the end of the day, what's left for you?

For a second let me be one of those to make you a little mad...but trust that I don't want to! In going through these constant battles myself with owning 2 businesses and starting a 3rd, there's something calming about knowing that you're not alone. With that said, the truth is you DO in fact have to take care of yourself in order to be more productive, manage your emotions, maintain ideal relationships, and achieve happiness in the day to day.

difficult as you think. Sure, when the web is flooded with a never ending feed of fitness programs and false promises, you may wonder what makes our approach any better? Frankly, our approach doesn't put the emphasis on a specific program, but rather we put the emphasis on you and your own abilities to succeed. Other programs are temporary, but the way we tackle wellness is to guide and empower you, which is what we believe to be the best way to create and sustain a long-term healthy lifestyle.

As you flip through the next few pages, I first want you to take a moment and think through everything you are good and successful at doing. Most likely you are great at your career! What talents are you good at? What about relationships? Do you have the coffee mug that states you're the "World's Greatest Mom/Dad?" Take 2 minutes and really think it through. Now write down all the things you 're good at and save this as a testament of your successes.

Now that you've identified some successful areas of your life, take 5 minutes and write down why you are successful. Reflect on your achievements and what steps you've taken to win at these areas of work and life. List out the key attributes that have led you this far and will continue to support your journey in those areas. Now...take a moment to congratulate yourself on all that you've achieved and TRULY acknowledge that you are a success, and that you can apply a similar sense of drive and commitment to the positive outcomes of your healthy lifestyle!

Now let's dive in!

CHAPTER ONE

FAIL TO PLAN, PLAN TO FAIL

by Cody Robinson
MS, MPH, CSCS



FAIL TO PLAN, PLAN TO FAIL

You Already Have the Skills

As busy professionals we are constantly looking for the "best practices" to better manage our time, chase the idea of work/life balance, how to perform better in our craft, and have an impact on the world around us.

As discussed earlier, I'm sure there are areas in your life that you have a strong grip, and others you just can't get a grip on. But when you stop and think about the successful areas, would you say that you are able to achieve these with strategic goals, identifying and writing down the key steps toward the end-goal, and have a way of tracking your results? Or do you just "happen" to be good at it? If I had to guess, there's some skill and planning involved.

An upper hand that busy professionals have over the general population is that you already have the skills of strategic planning, goal setting, assessing, tracking, re-evaluation/pivoting, and accomplishment. And honestly, these are the exact same tools/skill-sets that are necessary for a sustainable healthy lifestyle! So you've already got 50% of the battle won!

As Health Coaches we always start with the desired end results in mind and work our way backwards. We pick your brain on what areas pertaining to your health are you most confident to succeed in, and what areas you

aren't confident. Rather than telling you straight up what you need to do at the start, it's best for us to take a dive into your environments. What situations around you do you have control over? What can you change immediately and what's going to take some work? And of course, once you begin making key changes to your health, what strategies can you have in place in order to prevent relapses of your "old habits?"

And that's where a PLAN comes into true benefit. Sure, we can provide you with a template of how to get more exercise, eat healthier, sleep more, how to cope with daily stressors, and so on and so forth. However, if we were to be honest, I bet you already know what you should actually be doing when it comes to fitness, diet, better sleep, etc.? If I had to guess I would say that you have a pretty good idea. Then why can't you execute?

Your Reality is Different From Others

That's the kicker! You're super busy! Your daily life is complicated, along with your relationships and environments! Since I started HOMEFIT I quickly learned that most of the articles, blogs, vlogs, and other eBooks about healthy living that fill up your email inbox are not realistic. This is why blog posts like "How to Eat 5 Meals a Day," or "Quick and Simple 14 Ingredient Quinoa Salad Topped with Grilled Salmon and Homemade Vinaigrette Dressing," or "Take 60 Minutes to Meditate Each Day," are far too difficult and stressful to accomplish with your jam-packed schedule.

[Brief rant]. What often bothers me personally about the fitness industry is that many companies and personal brands are trying to sell you on the "idea of fitness." By having streaming access to fitness videos, the black label membership to Planet Fitness™, and a 21-Day fat flush program aren't enough for you to feel confident in your health/fitness options. If anything, they can make things worse by causing you to feel like a failure by not being able to fit in their demands.

But when you take a little time on the front end and build your own plan with personally tailored strategies that do in fact align with your life, the success becomes a reality. Here at HOMEFIT we understand you. We do what we do because we see your reality on a daily basis. We know that something needs to happen much deeper inside of you in order to create and sustain that lifestyle change you worry over and desire. Yes, we believe that change agent lies within you.

Be Intentional and Think Ahead

As you flip/scroll through the following pages in this compilation of key strategies to enhance your quality of life, keep in mind that it's necessary to build your own plan of action to achieve your desired outcomes.

Truthfully, the intention of your plan is not to just have a list of tasks. A solid game plan will actually help you to think through and prepare for barriers, those situations that happen unexpectedly in life that can derail your progress and threaten to cause a relapse in past behaviors that may lead to the feeling of "I'm starting all over again!!" Nobody wants this to

happen, but no journey in life is straight forward, especially the ones with great reward. With that said, it's good to keep in mind that some things are in your control and some things are not. So you have to prepared for anything.

[Tim Ferris, author of the thought provoking book "The Four Hour Work Week," discusses in a prior TED Talk](#) that in order to overcome his major apprehensions and fears of failure in achieving his goals is to apply an ancient Stoic technique of taking a specific scenario and writing down the worst things that could possibly happen. Rather than denying that your journey will not be easy and getting derailed at the first road block, it's recommended that you take the time to map out all the possible obstacles along the way. How would you handle them? How can you prevent them from happening?

We can write an entire book on the possible barriers for each wellness topic, but every person's life scenario is different. So we actually want to be a catalyst to developing your personalized plan and provide a thought-provoking strategy that will take you down the path of success.

Taking SMART Goals Even Further

At this point I'm sure you have heard of the SMART Goals acronym more than once, both in business and fitness.

However, I bet you can only count on one hand how many times you have actually written down your SMART goals. So, why not go ahead and choose the first area of fitness you want to work on and list them out?!

S - SPECIFIC
M - MEASUREABLE
A - ATTAINABLE
R - RELEVANT
T - TIME-BOUND

These goals can be provided for just about anything you want to achieve. But why stop there? We've been doing this for a long time and you can actually take a few more steps during the planning stage. As discussed in the [HOMEFIT WellTalk with Rebecca Dotson on Goal Setting](#), here's another acronym, SORT, that can help you prepare for possible barriers and plan for success:

S - STEPS you're going to take
O - OBSTACLES you may face
R - RESOURCES you can use
T - TIMELINE for completion

Now that you're already thinking about your journey in a very strategic way, let's see what our incredible fitness professionals have to say about key areas pertaining to your health and wellness!

Action Questions:

1. What obstacles might prevent you from adopting a specific behavior change on a regular basis?

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2. What situations do you have immediate control over to support your desired change?

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3. How can your social network and support system help you in this desired change?

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4. How might they hinder you in this desired change?

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CHAPTER TWO

RESILIENCE PRACTICES FOR LESS STRESS

by Sheila Levenhagen
A.S., YOGAFIT, NASM - SF



RESILIENCE PRACTICES FOR LESS STRESS

Your Personal Action Will Become Your Habit and Your Habits Shape Your Life

Has your story become that you are a fettered prisoner to tension, headaches, a racing heart, bedtime rumination or a constant feeling of agitation? Do you have repeated, but fleeting moments of inspiration to make positive choices for lowering your stress and then all your efforts fall flat? Creating positive new habits and releasing those that no longer serve you will greatly improve the quality of your life. Reducing your stress isn't some unworkable puzzle only a member of Mensa can solve or diminish. It is workable for you but only by YOU.

We basically know what is good for us and what isn't good for us. We know we are supposed to eat a high quality, balanced diet and we know that we are supposed to exercise. We know we are supposed to sleep 8 hours a night. We also know that we are supposed to "slow down" and not worry. We seem to know an awful lot! Yet, stress and the debilitating, often fatal symptoms are on the rise! Why are more people not finding joy and satisfaction in life? It is in large part because we are disconnected from our body and its sensations.

Obviously, the subject of stress management could lead in a dozen or more directions. I would like to lead you in the direction that simply brings you back to yourself. To your connection with your physical self, your consciousness and your personal action for wellbeing. Your personal action will become your habit and your habits shape your life. Is stress what you want? We must repeat useful and beneficial habits to strengthen us and make us sufficient not only for everyday living but to make us sufficient for the crisis moments we will inevitably experience in our lives. This is how we make ourselves resilient.

Resilience is our ability to bounce back after we experience something challenging; to recover quickly from something difficult. It's part of a whole cycle of connections. Being resilient is strength and part of being strong is persistence and willpower. Willpower is like a muscle – it can be strengthened. We can strengthen our willpower and persistence through practice. The author, **Octavia Butler** so wisely observed that “habit is persistence in practice.” I would like to share with you just 4 habits for resilience and reduction of stress.

I. Breath - Centered Yoga Practice

It may sound corny if you've heard it, but there really is a yoga practice for everyone - if you're open to it. I'm not really talking about novelties like kitten yoga or beer yoga. I'm speaking of a practice that brings you back to your body and awareness of what your body is feeling in the present moment. Don't underestimate the value of something so simple. It is effective partly because of a simple biological process.

Centering and focus on breath affects your nervous system positively. A healthy nervous system easily activates the parasympathetic nervous system (PNS) response. The focus on awareness of breath elicits a “rest and digest” response where one can thrive and be resilient. This is the opposite of a sympathetic nervous system response (SNS) which is “fight or flight”. Our busy lives and workload commonly place us in SNS mode. People who suffer post-traumatic stress for various reasons live more often in SNS mode. Did you realize that living in long-term, persistent stress can cause trauma within your body, telling your SNS to remain activated? An over-active SNS can lead to difficulties such as insomnia, anxiety, panic, high blood pressure and a whole host of other debilitating symptoms. A breath-centered yoga practice can positively and easily change the body. Studies show that a single class will temporarily alter gene expression, improve brain function and lower stress levels. Continuing to practice will bring about changes in levels of anxiety, can change blood sugar levels, begin to reduce blood pressure, decrease levels of chronic pain, quell depression and add flexibility, creating ease in movement. Can you practice a minimum of 10 minutes a day? If that’s all you’ve got it’s better than nothing!

II. Seated Meditation Practice

Meditation does not empty your mind or require that you “ommm” your heart out. It simply requires that you bring awareness to your breath, notice your thoughts and consciously send them away so you stay in the present moment. Then, you guessed it, rinse and repeat. That’s all. I say “try” because it will challenge you.

Our brains are wired for easily moving from thought to thought, place to place, past to future, future to past, zip, zip, zip...

This “monkey-mind” business causes us to become disconnected and gets us caught up in a frenzy of what should have happened, what could have happened and what might happen. Thoughts that reflect on the past can lead to depressive emotions. Thoughts that leap into the future can cause anxious emotions. Focusing on what is happening with your breath in the now is what meditation is all about. An easy way to begin is by sitting for 5 minutes a day! 5 minutes is a great start. 10 is even better, and so forth.

III. Mindfulness Practice

Mindfulness is simply being aware of what you are doing and as with meditation, endeavoring to remain in the present moment. For example, as I type I am only thinking about what I am typing. As I type I am noticing the sensation of pressure in each fingertip and each thumb. As I sit I am aware of my posture and sitting tall. I am aware that I hear the keys tap as each one is pressed. I am aware that I am breathing in and breathing out...Bringing detail to your present moment experience and maintaining nonjudgmental awareness of thought, emotion, physical sensation and breath awareness takes the focus off thinking about the past or the future.

IV. Smiling Practice

Yes, I am serious. Did you know a fake smile has the same effect as a spontaneous smile? Try smiling even when you don't feel like it – just do it! Facial movements trigger neurotransmitters called endorphins. Endorphins are “chemical messengers” released by our brain. They make us feel happy and less stressed. The brain “reads” the movement of the muscles in our face. The more we smile (fake or real), the more our brain is stimulated to release endorphins and this is a PNS response! Smile right now — not just with your mouth but also with your eyes!

All the above practices will help you activate your PNS — the rest and digest process of calming down and they will help you feel more in control and connected to your body. Feeling more in control of your moment to moment emotions will help you to reduce your level and frequency of stress. Continued practice will build on further reduction of stress.

Changing habits and implementing new practices requires that you remember what you want to accomplish! We seem to go on auto-pilot when in our hearts we have the best of intentions. How about taping reminders for yourself to your bathroom mirror, your bedroom door or your kitchen cabinets? You can effect positive change in your level of stress and without a doubt, create an easier path through life. Get rid of your all-or-nothing thinking. Life has a copious amount of gray area. When thinking about wellness in black and white terms you will create the paralysis of analysis and overthinking will defeat your desires.

Allow yourself to grow. You wouldn't expect a seed to pop open and a big, beautiful flower to suddenly appear. No, you plant that seed, nurture it with the water and sunlight of compassion, love and persistence in habit. Be kind to yourself if you falter - but choose to press back on the path forward. Before you know it, your colorless little seed will burst forth and blossom with vibrancy and more joy in life. You have far more power over your life than it occurs to you to even think about! Only you can direct your days. Changing existing habits and learning some new ones can make a monumental difference in your quality of life, your longevity and your resilience!

CHAPTER THREE

REST IS BEST

by Lynda Ratliff
BA, ACE -CPT & HC

REST IS BEST

Sleep is Imperative and Vacations are Essential

My son would laugh at the idea of me telling people to get their rest. I'm quite vocal in my house about the over use of naps and sleeping the day away. Truth is, I believe it is a very important component to our overall health and wellness. I just do not subscribe to laziness. There is a major difference between rest and laziness, so, let's get this straight. Sleep is imperative and vacations are essential. The use of rest periods in your workouts and from your workouts are crucial to the success of a training schedule. Let's take a look at each of these.

Sleep

Sleep plays a vital role in good health and well-being throughout your life. Getting enough quality sleep at the right times can help protect your mental health, physical health, quality of life and safety, according to the [National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute](#). Sleep deficiency increases the risk of obesity, heart disease, kidney disease, high blood pressure and diabetes. It affects how your body reacts to insulin and adversely affects your immune system.

I've heard a number of excuses from a number of people about why they don't get enough sleep. Some of the most common ones are: I couldn't fall asleep, I have too much to do, I have too much on my mind, I wake up throughout the night.

There are several recommendations when it comes to how much sleep you should be getting. The best indicator is how you feel when you get up. If you can wake up without an alarm clock and feel rested, you got enough sleep. If you're like most people, the ones that hit the snooze button over and over, you're not getting enough rest. A short-lived bout of insomnia is generally nothing to worry about. Everyone goes through periods of restlessness or waking up in the night. Chronic sleep loss is a big concern though. When you continually and consistently do not get enough rest, your health will suffer. There are a number of techniques to combat this health stealer. Techniques are great if you're implementing them and they work, so here are a few:

- Keep a regular sleep/wake schedule – Plan to go to bed at the same time every night (yes, even on the weekends) and get up about the same time each day allowing the prescribed 7-9 hours. If you're used to getting only 6 hours, start with 6 and a half and progressively increase the number of minutes each night. You won't miss the awake time as you'll become more productive during those hours.
- Consume your liquids early in the day. If you're getting up in the night to go to the bathroom, then use the technique we use on our children, don't let them drink before bed. The general rule of thumb is no caffeine four to six hours prior to bedtime, but I would include all liquids in that four-hour timeframe.

- Get regular exercise. When your body gets the amount of movement/ exercise it needs each day, you are generally more tired by the end of the day and able to sleep better.
- Cut out the noise and lights in your room. Make it dark and quiet. Many studies have shown how the body reacts to lights and sounds. When the sun comes up your body should naturally wake, and when it sets, it's generally time for your body to rest. Try to keep the room you sleep in similar to that cycle.
- If you need to, set an alarm to make sure you go to bed. If you need one to get up in the morning, then there is a good possibility you need one to remind you it's time for bed.
- If your struggle is falling asleep, then try some breathing exercises. The practice of meditation has been around since the beginning of time and the reason it is still around today is because it works. We just get a little too busy to remember to do it. Start by getting comfortable in your bed, then focus on your breathing. Breathe in for two counts, hold it for two counts, then exhale for four counts. Repeat breathing in for three counts, hold for three counts and exhale for six counts. As you feel your body begin to relax on the exhale, continue this pattern breathing in for 2-4 counts, holding it for the same number and exhaling for double the count. On days when my mind is racing with thoughts of the day or what needs to be done, this little technique has done more to help me fall asleep than anything.

- Researchers have found that a true vacation can help interrupt habits like working late or watching an electronic screen before bed. Our restless nights are often a result of the chatter in our heads about work related issues or the daily grind of what needs to be done and thoughts of our current situation. A great way to disrupt those thought patterns is by taking a vacation.

Vacations

Vacations increase productivity and creativity, so if you think you don't have time for a vacation, think again. Study after study concludes that professionals who take time off were significantly more productive overall than those who spent more time working. Detaching from a familiar environment can help get new perspectives to everyday life according to [Adam Galinsky](#), professor at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University. New perspectives lead to enhanced creativity.

I don't know who first coined the phrase *"Do what you love, and you'll never work another day in your life,"* but I can attest to the sentiment behind it. I love what I do. I love serving others and showing them how to better take care of themselves through personal training, health coaching and behavior change. The same is true for many of us. We can love what we do, but we still need to take a break from it now and then, so we can be even better at what we do. It's also said, *"you cannot see the forest through the trees."* When you're in the midst of your daily grind, even if you love it, you lose sight of the big picture. Your creativity is stifled and the job you love can become mundane.

Weekends are great for getting away and having a fun little adventure, a time to unplug from the daily rituals. A true vacation will give you a few days to transition from your work mindset to be a willing participant in the ease that grows from a real vacation. Is there a magic number? Some say yes, that 10 days to two weeks is necessary for you to drop the burdens of your life back home and truly relax and enjoy the experiences that unfold. As a willing world traveler, I would say give it at least 7 days, but if you can afford it, two weeks will leave you feeling refreshed and renewed.



It is actually during the rest periods that your body rebuilds the muscles that you tear down during strength training.

Vacations tie directly into rest from your workouts; another necessity for recovery. Your body uses rest periods to adapt to the stress of exercise. It plays a vital role in the body's ability to replenish its energy stores and repair damaged tissue. It is actually during the rest periods that your body rebuilds the muscles that you tear down during strength training.

Have you ever heard the saying ["too much of a good thing?"](#) It dates back to the late 15th century. Even back then people were overindulging in things they considered good for you. Don't get me wrong, exercise is not only good for you, it's an extremely important piece of your healthy living puzzle. It, like most things, should be done in moderation. Overtraining can do more damage than good.

The **American College of Sports Medicine** recommends that adults get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity cardiorespiratory exercise per week. How it is broken up depends on your schedule, but an example would be spending 30-60 minutes working out moderately (i.e., brisk walking) 5 days per week, or 20-60 minutes of vigorous exercise (i.e., jogging/running) 3 days per week.

For strength training, ACSM recommendations suggest training each major muscle group two or three days per week and leaving at least 48 hours for recovery between each training session. Again, the best plan for you should be discussed with your fitness professional.

Athletes must also program rest periods into their yearly training schedule. That goes for you too. When you train properly, following the guidelines provided, or if you're training for a specific event, like a marathon, mud run or even a 5k, rest is a reward for the body, mind and spirit.

The importance of rest cannot be overstated because it's an equal part of the total process required to build strength, endurance, and muscle. So, like I said, GET YOUR REST! And consider it a reward for a job well-done!

CHAPTER FOUR

FUEL WITH A PURPOSE

by Jessica Carr
B.S., CFL - 1

FUEL WITH A PURPOSE

Keep it Simple Sweetie!

Ketogenic diet, Paleo diet, no carb diet, weighing macros, timing macros... Wait, what is a macro? Does this sound like a stream of thought plucked right out of your head? I know it was for me when I started my journey to lifelong fitness years ago. There is so much great information out there. In contrast there is a lot of misinformation out there. Nutrition and eating for your goals can be so confusing, that it's hard to make sense of it all. Friends, it does not have to be complicated! I had much more success losing fifty pounds when I stopped trying fad diets and focused on real foods, but we will talk more of that later. [Ben Bergeron](#), trainer to some of the top athletes in the world, said on the topic of nutrition, "Eat real food, not too much of it, mostly plants. Done." Can it truly be that simple?

Shopping for Real Foods

Say this with me, "Keep it simple, sweetie!" (KISS for short, because you should love yourself). The following is as complex as I want you to get with your nutrition. Are you ready? Life changing stuff coming at you right now! CrossFit founder Greg Glassman states, "Eat meat and vegetables, nuts and seeds, some fruit, little starch, and no sugar.

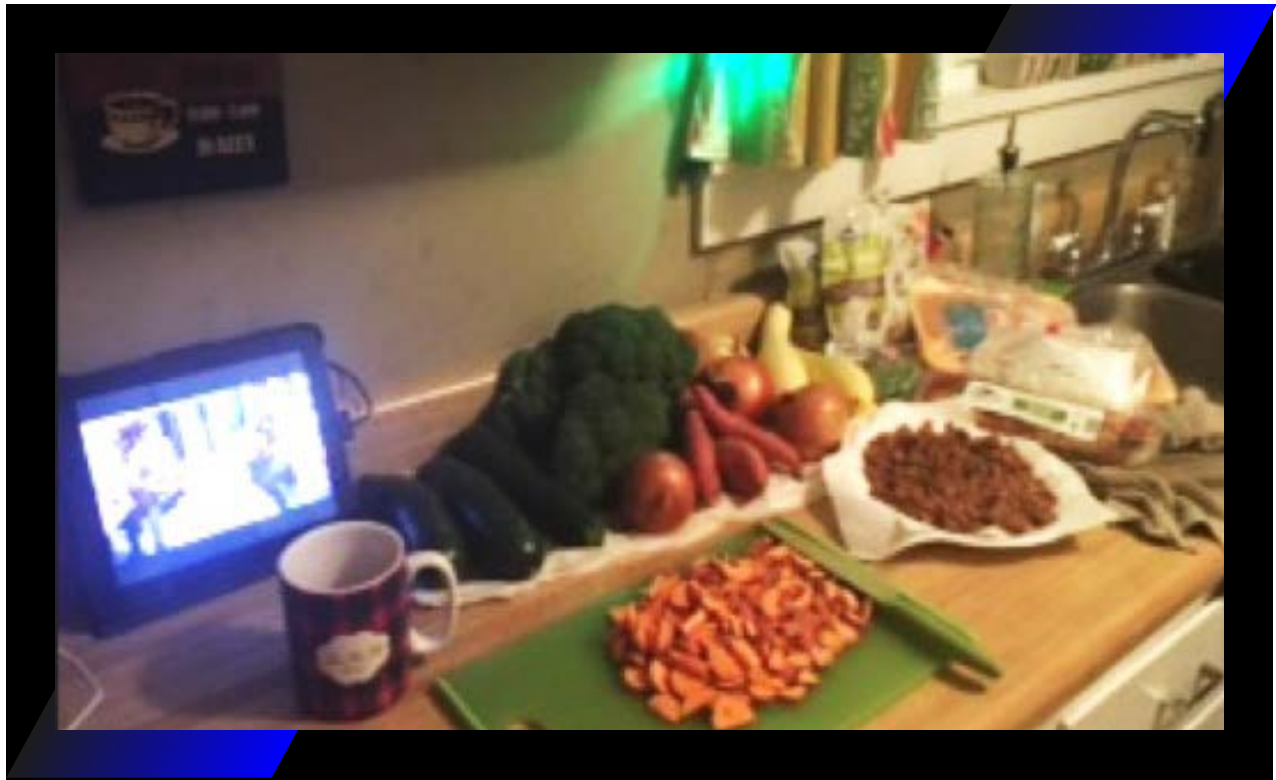
Keep intake to levels that will support exercise but not body fat.” Sounds pretty simple, right?

Therein lies the key to creating nutrition habits that aren’t a fad diet. The human race was designed to live an active lifestyle supported by foods that came from the ground, or have a mother. How can you find these foods? Well, I’m going to let you in on two little secrets. When shopping, try to steer clear of the processed foods that loom in the inner isles of the grocery store. If you dare to enter the inner isles, grab the box, look at the label, and give it a gander. If you can’t pronounce those ingredients, then put it down and step away! Think about it, the healthier, whole foods are shelved on the outer walls. They are, after all, the most aesthetically pleasing foods to see when you walk in the store. So, remember for the best quality foods, shop the perimeter! **Follow this link** for a better idea of these clean foods.

Preparing for Success

So, now you are home with bags of whole food. You have re-stocked your shelves with fresh foods and are feeling really good about yourself. Then you realize how do I prep this food? Have you ever heard the saying, “fail to plan, and plan to fail?” It’s true, a little preparation is involved here. Nothing worth it ever occurred without effort, right? In my experience, based on how busy the season of life I’m in, I’ve found two methods of food prep to be most effective, one more aggressive than the other. When I was working a full time and a part time job, I had no time to spare at the end of the day to spend time in the kitchen.

Nor could I muster up the energy to do so. On Sunday, after morning services, I fired up the oven and my iPad for my weekly Netflix and cook. These two hours were much more self-satisfying than a Netflix and chill, and I was ready to tackle the week ahead!



Here is my kitchen counter on prep day:

I did all the recipe following, all the chopping, all the marinating of raw meats and cooking of ground meats ahead of time.

Here was my process. Friday night I sat down with my husband to plan out the meals and snacks we wanted for the upcoming week. I would then think about what went into each dish and make my grocery list based off that. Sometimes, I even re-write it to coincide with the order of appearance from the entrance to the checkout line!

Saturday I usually hit the gym or maybe I just let myself catch up on much needed sleep! If I didn't make it to Aldi on Saturday, we'd stop on our way home from service on Sunday. No matter what, as much as I just wanted a Sunday nap, I made it a priority to prep on Sunday.

Now here is where my prep differs from some. I did all the recipe following, all the chopping, all the marinating of raw meats and cooking of ground meats ahead of time. I did not, and still don't portion out meals during my weekly prep. I use gallon bags and storage containers to create a meal that I can pop on the stove or in the oven. I love the feeling of a fresh meal rather than one I warm up in the microwave from a plastic container. The leftovers, are what I then pack into individual containers for our lunches through the week. My husband loves to tell me about the jealous looks he gets at work when his co-workers see his lunch. Now you can certainly completely pre-cook **everything** and portion out **everything**. I just prefer to sit down to a meal on a plate at night, rather than from a container.

Our favorite snacks I then portion out into individual bags include, hard boiled eggs, a serving of almonds or nuts, high-quality lunch meat, or vegetable slices. All of these can be so satisfying and easy to bag up at the beginning of the week. This method of portioning out leftovers made more sense in my mind than having forty containers stacked and ready in my fridge, but this is certainly an option, too. Again, that doesn't sound so complicated, now does it?

Macros, and Portions, and Timing, Oh My!

I know what you are thinking, I have managed to simplify shopping and prep, how am I going to simplify portions too? I'm about to blow your mind. Here it goes. Relate your portion sizes to familiar objects. I don't know about you, but weighing and measuring foods really just makes me angry. It can be helpful to establish exactly what a portion is in the beginning, but after a while you will have a good ballpark of what a portion should be. Speaking of ball park, did you know a serving size of healthy carbohydrates should be about the size of a baseball and is about 40 grams of carbs? A serving of fat is about the size of a golf ball. A serving of meat should be the size of a deck of cards and is about 18 grams of protein. A serving of fruit is the size of a baseball at about 25 carbs, and a serving of vegetables with a low glycemic index (low in starch) is about the size of a softball. For these vegetables low in starch, you don't have to worry about amount as much as using them to feel full. Broccoli and spinach all day, my dear! Did you see what I did there? The [WebMD Portion Size Plate](#) has a lot more helpful visuals for portion sizing.

What's left now? How about timing? How much should I eat daily of the three macronutrients: protein, carb, and fat? How much should I eat on training/workout days versus non-training days? Let's keep this simple too, friends! On days that you train, think about using your carbohydrates for fuel and recovery. One to two hours before your workout, allow twenty to thirty grams of carbohydrate to fuel your workout.

The closer to your workout, the simpler your carb choice should be. Think of it as a something you could keep on your stomach that isn't too heavy, like a fruit. As far as amount of each nutrient, you should think about some of each with every meal you eat. This is where you think about your portions sizes and objects as measure. Below is a general guideline.

Daily Template

Breakfast

Protein:

Carb:

Fat:

Lunch

Protein:

Carb:

Fat:

Snack: (a third of what you eat in meals)

Protein:

Carb:

Fat:

Dinner:

Protein:

Carb:

Fat:

Snack: (a third of what you eat in meals)

Protein:

Carb:

Fat:

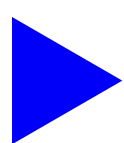
Sustained Lifelong Wellness

Bottom line: keep it simple, Sweetie. KISS! You deserve to love yourself, and you owe it to yourself to stop following a fad diet and eat the way we were intended. You know what else happened when I started eating this way? Not only did I lose fifty pounds, I also came off two medications as a twenty-five-year-old! Good things happen when you make good choices! My husband says, “most people worry about how they eat from November to January. I worry about how I eat January to November.” What is the point here? Create eating habits that are just that, a habit! The goal and purpose is to instill and maintain healthy nutrition habits that can be referenced for a lifetime as opposed to a short-term diet with unrealistic results and sustainability. This way, when life, holidays, and mishaps happen, you know you aren’t going off the deep end. You have the confidence that you can get right back on track with your usual lifelong journey in wellness.

CHAPTER FIVE

FOUNDATIONAL EXERCISE ROUTINE

by Emily Lightsey
BS, ACSM - CPT



FOUNDATIONAL EXERCISE ROUTINE



The Wise Build on a Strong Foundation

Everyone knows that having a good foundation is important. In order to build a strong and stable building, the foundation must be strong and stable. This can be applied to our health and fitness, too.

Understanding and performing foundational exercises can help build up your fitness to produce a strong, stable, and healthy version of yourself. What makes this even better, is you don't even need equipment, so these foundational moves can be done anywhere.

Squat:

This is one of the most foundational and functional movements in our lives. These will help strengthen your whole body: muscles and bones, too!

How to do it:

Start off by standing with your feet hip width apart or just slightly wider. Make sure your toes are pointed out just a little, around 5 to 20 degrees. Hinge at the hips as you bend your knees. Keep your back straight and chest up. Look straight ahead the whole time during this move. As you come up, make sure you are pressing your weight through your heels.

Here are a couple of links to show you proper form for a squat:

[Dumbbell Squats – Front View \(YouTube\)](#)

[Dumbbell Squats – Side View \(YouTube\)](#)

Lunge:

This move will help strengthen your lower body as well as help to even out any muscle imbalances. Another great exercise you can do anywhere, both stationary or walking.

How to do it:

Start off by standing tall with your feet hip width apart. Step forward with one leg, shifting your weight forward in order for your heel to hit the floor first. Lower your body down until thigh is parallel to the floor and your shin is nice and vertical. Press through your heel to push back up into your starting position. From here, lunge on the other leg. (*Note: If you have good mobility, let opposite knee just slightly tap the floor*)

Here are a couple of links to show you proper form for a lunges:

[Lunge Demo - Side View \(YouTube\)](#)

Pushup:

One of those moves we remember from P.E., but such a good foundational move. This move is a total body move believe it or not. You work your upper body and it engages your core and lower body.

How to do it:

(If you are a beginner, start with pushups on the wall, and progress your way to a bench or chair, and then to the floor.) Going down to the ground in the kneeling position, bring your feet together behind you. Bend forward to place your palms flat, positioning your hands shoulder-width apart with fingers facing forward or turned slightly inward. Shift your weight forward until your shoulders are positioned directly over your hands. Reposition your hands as needed to allow full extension of your body without any bend in the hips or knees. Stiffen your torso by contracting your core/abdominal muscles, your glutes and your quadriceps muscles. Keeping your gaze straight down (not ahead or back at you), slowly lower yourself until your elbows are 90 degrees or smaller. This will be different for everyone depending on age, mobility, etc. Once your chest touches the floor (or you have your arms at the angle that works for you), press yourself back up into that starting position.

Deadlift:

The deadlift can help improve total-body strength, while placing emphasis on the posterior muscles involved in hip, knee and back extension.

How to do it:

There are three specific phases to the deadlift: the setup, the pull and the lockout.

- **The set-up:** Stand with feet hip-to shoulder-width apart. Hinge at the hips and sink back into your glutes while keeping your spine extended and chest lifted toward the ceiling. Grip the bar with one hand facing palm-up and the other hand facing palm-down. This over-under grip is for safety and can keep the bar from rolling out of your hands. Squeeze the bar with your hands as you sink back into your hips. As you sink into the hips, think about pulling your back down to engage the lats. This will keep your low-back stable.
- **The Pull:** Push your feet into the floor to straighten your legs and lift your chest as you lift the weight off the floor. As you stand up, think about pulling back on your knees and pushing your hips forward.
- **The Lockout:** At the top of the movement, hold your shoulders back as you keep your spine straight and tall. Pause for a moment before descending into the lowering phase. Slowly push your hips back while keeping your spine long and chest lifted into the air. Use your thigh muscles to resist the downward pull of gravity as the weight lowers back to the floor. At the bottom, pause, rest your hips and repeat for the desired number of repetitions.

Here's a quick video:

[Deadlift - HomeFit Demo](#)

Plank:

We can't forget about core! The plank is an isometric core strengthening exercise that not only helps to strengthen your core, but helps with your posture as well. It even sneaks in some upper body and lower body work, too.

How to do it:

Start off by lying face down with your legs extended and your elbows bent directly underneath your shoulders. Keeping your feet hip width apart, engage your abs, tuck your toes, and lift your body up. Be sure to keep your back straight and have your breathing steady. *(A good tip is to first see how long you can hold it to get a base idea for adding it into your fitness routine).*

Here's a quick video to a advanced walkout plank:

[Walkout Plank Demo](#)

Try one of these two routines that you can do anywhere:

Workout One:

- Bodyweight Squats: 3 sets of 10
- Pushups: 3 sets of 10
- Lunges: 3 sets of 10, alternating legs
- Plank hold: aim for 30 seconds
- Deadlift: 3 sets of 10 at a moderate weight

Workout Two: This circuit workout keeps the heart rate up providing a great cardio workout in addition to wonderful strength building routine.

** Do 3 rounds of the following:

- 12 to 15 bodyweight squats
- 12-15 pushups
- 12 lunges, alternating
- 30 second plank hold (longer if advanced)
- 12-15 Deadlift at a moderate weight

With these exercises, you will be able to have a foundation that will help build and strengthen you!

CHAPTER SIX

FLEX YOURSELF

by Trey Tate
BS, NASM - CPT / MMAC

FLEX YOURSELF

Warmup

Stretching is an important activity to keep your body mobile and injury free. Give yourself the gift of at least 10 minutes of stretching in the morning upon waking and 10 minutes before you go to bed. And of course...stretch throughout the day as needed.


Muscles respond better to stretching when they are warmed up. Here are two wonderful stretches to begin every routine with:

Five (5) Cat/Camels and five (5) Bird dogs on each side.

Breathing calmly and purposely, go between these two spinal positions to warm up your spine.

Cat/Camel (or Cow):

Start in the kneeling position with wrists under shoulders and knees under hips. Begin by stiffening your core and abdominal muscles to position your spine in a neutral position, avoiding sagging or arching. Then, gently exhale and contract your abdominal muscles. Starting at the tailbone, tuck your pelvis and continue rounding your spine until the back is rounding towards the ceiling and allow your head to fall towards your chest. Hold this position for 10-15 seconds End position: head and pelvis tucked and back rounded.



“Notice that the stiffest tree is most easily cracked, while the bamboo or willow survives by bending with the wind.”

- Bruce Lee

Reverse this motion...Imagine you have two headlights on your tailbone that you want to shine at the ceiling. Let gravity take over as the belly falls towards the floor and the head looks forward. Keep the shoulders packed away from your ears and towards the spine. Hold 10-15 seconds. Move fluidly between these two motions.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GqOBkMC6um0&feature=youtu.be>

After you have done 5 spinal motions of cat/camels (cows), do 5 bird dogs.

Birddogs:

An exceptional exercise to train the body how to stabilize the lumbar spine (low back) during upper and lower extremity movement. Start in the kneeling position with your knees and feet hip-width apart and hands directly under your shoulders with your fingers facing forward. Stiffen your core and abdominal muscles to position your spine in a neutral position, avoiding any excessive sagging or arching.

Simultaneously extend your leg and contralateral (opposite) arm until they are at or near parallel, to the floor without any rotation in the hip. Slowly lower both and repeat on the opposing arm and leg.

Tight Hips = Back Pain

There are many muscles that tie directly to your pelvis. A muscle imbalance in this region can pull your pelvis into bad positions, causing undue stress on your back and possible pain or injury.

Hip Flexor Stretch:

If you sit often, you should be performing this stretch regularly. Right Hip Flexor – Get in a half-kneeling position on the floor, with right knee down and left leg in front. Front and back leg should be making approximately 90 degree angles. Get tall throughout your spine. **Squeeze your glutes to tuck your pelvis**, this important cue will prevent you from overextending your back. From this position, keeping the glutes squeezed, drive the hips forward until you feel a good stretch on your front right hip. Hold for at least 30 seconds and repeat with other side.

[How To Stretch Your Hip Flexor - Video Demo](#)

Hamstrings:

Stand tall with a desk or stool in front of you. Prop your straight right leg onto the desk, toe pointing towards the ceiling. Once you stabilize your balance and get a tall spine, start to hinge your hips back (think butt reaching for the wall behind you). You should feel a stretch on the back of your right leg.

[Key Hamstring Stretches - Video Demo](#)

Chest and Shoulders:

Cell phones, cars, and computers have wrecked havoc on this part of our bodies. To open up, all you need is a door frame.

Stand tall in front of a door frame. Bring arms up to 90 degrees – elbow same height as your shoulder. Gently press your forearms against the door frame as you step one leg through. Keep a proud chest (be the pigeon) as you breathe calmly – feeling the stretch throughout your chest and shoulders. Hold for at least 30 seconds.

[Pec/Chest and Shoulder Stretch – Video Demo](#)

Stretching hack:

Muscle fibers generally only move in one direction. They contract, and the muscle fibers shorten. They relax, and the muscle fibers lengthen. If you want to stretch a certain muscle, do the opposite of its flexed position. For instance, the bicep will flex the elbow when contracted. To stretch the bicep, simply straighten the arm with the wrist pulled back.

With all these stretches, make sure to breathe properly and listen to your body. Stretching should be uncomfortable, but not painful.

Stick Stretches:

Find a long wooden dowel, small PVC pipe, or broomstick.

Grab the broomstick with both hands, palms facing down and straighten arms in front of you wider than your shoulders. The width of your hands apart is not an exact science, experiment with what gives you the best stretch.

With straight arms out in front, squeeze your glutes to lock your hips and draw belly button to spine as you bring the stick overhead and continue moving it behind your head until a good stretch is felt in arms, chest, and shoulders.

You can explore this position by gently pulling one arm at a time to intensify the stretch to one side of the body.


Repeat this stretch with palms facing up and gently bring your straightened arms overhead. Explore once in this position.

Finally, put stick on your back so it is resting on your shoulders. Extend arms outwardly and rest the arms on the stick so now you are in a 'scarecrow' position.

While keeping a flat back, with belly button drawn in to your spine, reach your hips back to hinge, lean forward forward into a bend until a hamstring stretch is felt. From this position, gently rotate right hand towards your right foot. Explore this position and then repeat with left side.

We hope this guide will give you some simple instructions that will allow you to navigate your way to better overall health. We have a great team of personal trainers, yoga instructors, health coaches and nutritionists to assist you in person at our Birmingham, Huntsville and Nashville locations, or online! We wish you a very happy and health lifestyle, and please don't hesitate to visit our website for more tips to support your journey!

www.homefit.com



"Fitness is not about being better than someone else...it's about being better than you used to be."

- Author Unknown



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