

“I NEED A REASON NOT TO VISIT MY PERSONAL TRAINER”

Self: Important or not, it gives me the excuse...I feel better putting it off.

Truth: Excusitis and this will further you from reaching any health goal.

(It's really not about the program... Life is about choice)

1. I'm too busy

Many people don't exercise because they feel weighed down with work, but a good sweat session will make you more productive on the job. You'll have less stress, a clearer head and a better perspective. "You can actually get more work done after your workout than before," says Mark Anshel, Ph.D., a performance counselor with LGE Performance Systems, a corporate training center in Orlando, Florida.

A recent study at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign suggested that people who thought they were too busy to exercise really did have the time but chose not to make it a priority. Figure out how to incorporate physical activity into your workday. Try exercising at lunchtime, when many of us can steal away without missing too many calls or meetings.

2. I'll never look like Jennifer Lopez, so why bother?

"Comparing yourself with others is unrealistic and often leads to feelings of frustration, which can sabotage your workouts," says Richard Van Haveren, Ph.D., a sport psychologist at Georgia State University in Atlanta. Instead, set challenging but attainable goals, then focus on how you're going to achieve them, for example, by running two miles a day three days a week. "In this case, running is something specific that you know you can do, whereas looking like a certain celebrity may not be."

3. I'm too sore from yesterday's workout

Light exercise the day after an intense workout may help you recover faster, says Priscilla M. Clarkson, Ph.D., a professor of exercise science at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. When you lift weights, you cause microtears in your muscles that then mend, making the muscle even stronger. Exercise, she says, probably increases blood flow, nourishing the muscles with oxygen and removing waste products. A recent study at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, shows that people who engaged in light activity the day after a strenuous workout experienced less soreness than those who didn't.

4. I feel as if I'm getting sick

Feeling under the weather doesn't have to keep you from the gym. Research from Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana, shows that working out with a head cold isn't harmful. The study, which divided volunteers with colds into two groups—one that exercised every other day and the other not at all—found no difference in the duration or severity of volunteers' symptoms. "While exercise may not improve or shorten your cold, it certainly won't make it any worse," says lead study author Thomas Weidner, Ph.D.

5. I'm too stressed

Instead of adding tension to your life, exercise actually reduces it. Studies show that when faced with nerve-racking situations, regular exercisers are less likely to experience chest or joint pain, anxiety or depression. Working out can buffer stress simply because it acts as a distraction. University of Wisconsin -- Madison kinesiology's Bill Morgan, Ed.D., compared the effects of meditation, hypnosis, exercise and resting quietly to determine which had the greatest ability to promote relaxation. He found that by diverting people's attention away from their worries, exercise was most effective at lowering tension levels, with its calming effects lasting up to five hours.

6. I'm not in the mood

If you're in a bad mood, a good workout can improve it--almost instantly. In a study conducted by the department of exercise science at the University of Georgia in Athens, researchers found that women with high levels of anxiety experienced marked relief after riding a stationary bike for 40 minutes. Many researchers attribute the exercise-induced mood lift to several biochemical changes in the body, including a rush of endorphins to areas of the brain that control emotion and behavior (a phenomenon called runner's high).

7. I'm not changing my appearance

Working out less than three days per week is not even classified as maintenance. To change your appearance you must burn 3500 calories in one given week. The national academy of sports medicine agrees that if the goal is weight loss or muscle gain this cannot be accomplished less than three days per week. The process of exercise metabolism states that a reduction in calories less than 1200 female, 1500 male will also halt the body in utilizing fat as a fuel. (called gluconeogenesis) Meal frequency with real whole foods is the key to long term weight loss.

Dave Parise CPT

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