




week Twelve

Keep On Keeping On



Write any notes here

A woman with curly blonde hair and round sunglasses is sitting on a pink bicycle. She is wearing a blue and white striped shirt and blue jeans. The bicycle has a black basket on the handlebars. They are positioned on a concrete ledge overlooking the ocean. The sky is a soft mix of pink and blue, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The text "How To Make Exercise A Lifelong Habit" is overlaid in white serif font across the center of the image.

How To Make Exercise A Lifelong Habit

How To Make Exercise A Lifelong Habit

Three months on, I'm sure that you know the benefits of moving more. So how do you plan to keep being more active now that we've reached the end of your Back-To-Basics course? We all know how work and other commitments can quickly fill up the day, leaving little time to take care of yourself. That's why it's important to create habits and routines that really resonate with you.

Here's a few ideas to keep you on the right track...

Know Your Why

Wanting to be more active is not enough – you must know why you're doing it: what will it mean to you if you achieve your goal as well as how you'd feel if you don't. Most people say that their goal is to lose weight or be less tired. But the bigger goal, the one that will truly help you be consistent, may be to feel good about your own body and become someone who feels energetic and active throughout the day. So be consistent in becoming that person. Write it down and look at it every time you're about to make an excuse. Spending time to find your real 'why' will help you to keep going.

Start Small

Avoid the all or nothing approach; it tends to lead to burn out and injury. A better tactic to stay consistent is to try short 20–30-minute workouts like those on Harley Street At Home. Experiment with different formats like cardio or strength (on those days you feel more energetic) or yoga or breathwork (when you want something more restorative). Then, when you've stuck with the workouts for a while, look to increase the intensity and duration.

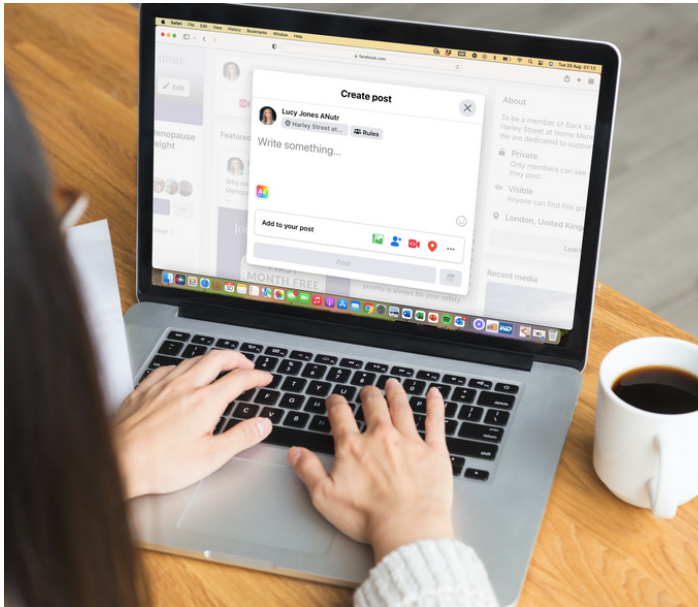
Pick Your Time Of The Day And Stick To It Everyday

Be it early morning or later in the evening, the key is to find a realistic time of the day that you can block for yourself. How to do this? Make a note of all your work and home commitments and find the days and times in your week that you are most likely to stick to. Then, treat your exercise as you would any other commitment and mark it in at a scheduled time. Don't let yourself miss a session. Travelling? Go for a walk and explore. Feeling tired? Try a scaled down version or go for something more restorative like yoga.



Stop Relying On Motivation

Want to stay consistent with exercise? Stop waiting to feel motivated enough. The key to making exercise a daily habit is to just keep on turning up. Things don't have to be perfect. Some sessions will be better than others. But if you've committed to (let's say) four days of exercise in a week, you must show up for all four – no excuses!



Review Your Progress Weekly

Measuring your progress takes you one step closer to creating healthy habits. So, charting your activity in the Facebook group, for example, and discussing your highs and lows with others is a powerful motivator to stick with it. Measuring your progress also provides a record of your progression – which can be really motivating.

Mix It Up

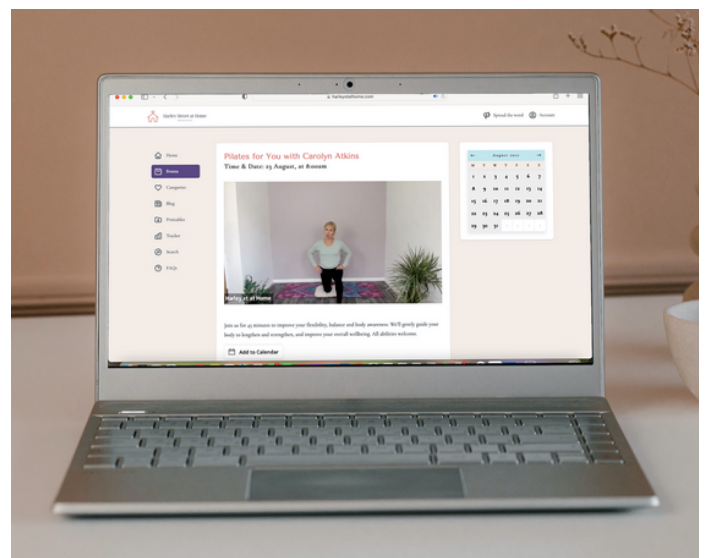
Our bodies are fantastic at adapting. So as time goes by, try mixing it up. You will also be more committed to sticking with things if you find it interesting. It doesn't mean that you need to try out something new every day, but look at a mix of classes – strength, walking, yoga to add some variation. So, make sure you have a balanced diet of resistance, high intensity, and restorative exercises.

Find An Exercise Buddy

Getting active with someone is a terrific way to boost motivation, hold each other accountable and stick to your fitness goal. It also adds a social element, which brings more fun and helps you stay consistent. Don't know anyone locally? Find one in our Facebook group.

Please Yourself

When I say, 'do something you like,' I don't mean don't challenge yourself and just do what is easiest. But if you're struggling to find exercise you enjoy, try out all the classes we have on offer until you find it, because you will. What's more, activities that combine a range of physical movement with enjoyable social interactions are the easiest to stick with and make the greatest impact on your overall health, so try signing up to a class in real-time.



Remember Progress, Not Perfection

Don't let one missed workout derail you and lead to weeks or even months of inactivity. Of course, if you're unwell take time off to recuperate but the moment you feel better get back to it. Even if those first few back are the worst workouts ever, don't sweat it, it's not important. What is important is getting back into the habit as quickly as possible.

Also, I want to give you a gentle reminder that you're doing this for yourself, to take care of your body and to make you feel good. So, make sure you're focusing on your sense of wellbeing, not a dress size or a number on a scale.

Make It As Easy As Possible

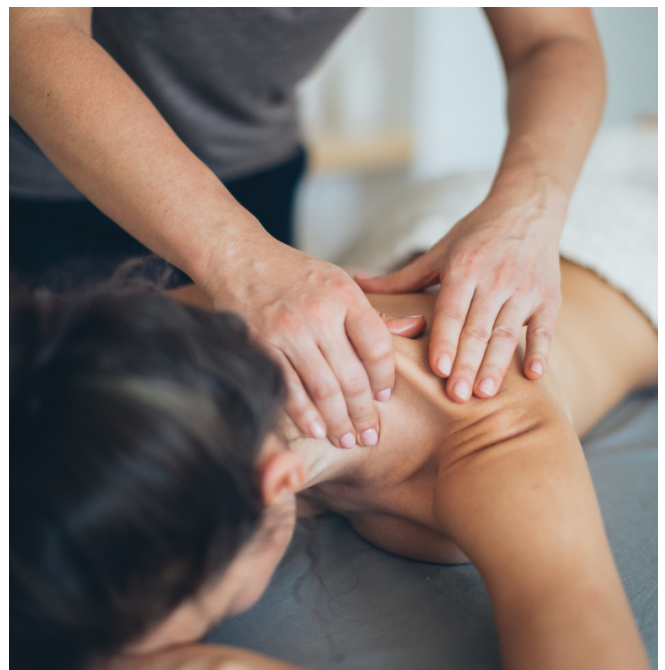
A key to forming good habits is removing as many obstacles as possible. The easier it is, the more likely we'll do it. So, consider what gets in your way of working out. Is it time, energy, or even something like family commitments? For example, let's say you have children involved in after-school sports. Between your schedule and theirs you may feel like you have no time to exercise. One way to work within these confines though might be that when they have sports practice, instead of driving them there and sitting in your car or driving home and back to pick them up, drop them off and go for a walk and stop every so often and do some resistance band exercises. That way, you've removed the obstacle of not having enough time. To make it even easier, lay out your workout clothes the night before and immediately change into them at the end of the day so when it's time to take them to practice and get your workout in, you're ready to go.

Focus On The Process, Not Just The Results

A lot of times when we don't see immediate results, we get frustrated and give up. But to get the results you must have a good process and do it consistently. If you do that, the results will take care of themselves. That's why this must become a habit – like brushing your teeth. So, you don't have to obsessively think about it, it'll just be something you do.

Reward Yourself

Short-term rewards are enticing. So why not get some short-term benefits from exercise along with all the long-term ones? Maybe you love to come home from work and sit on the couch and scroll through Facebook. You could make a rule that you can't do that until you've done your Harley Street At Home class. Then, once you finish your exercise you get that immediate payoff of going online. Or maybe it's something a little less immediate, like where if you work out a certain number of times per month, you'd earn say a massage, or a manicure.



Start To See Yourself As A Physical Person

The more you exercise, the more it'll become a part of who you are. And if it's who you are, you'll be more likely to do it. I can't tell you how much this has contributed to exercise becoming a habit for me over the years... Of course, I didn't go out running one day and immediately say afterwards, "I'm a runner!" It took time. Now though, I actively look forward to getting my trainers on and getting out there.

The Bottom Line

Fitness is a lifestyle that you choose to live. It is the collection of these choices such as exercise and nutrition that keep us fit throughout our lives. I hope my tips help you get closer to your goal of staying consistent with exercise and building a healthy habit.