How to Make Exercise an Unbreakable Habit

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Adding exercise to your daily routine is a common resolution entrepreneurs make and quickly abandon months after starting. Exercise improves mental health, boosts productivity and has countless physical benefits, but creating a new habit is hard. A lot of business owners won't stick to their new workout plan as soon as life gets "busy."

The hardest part of exercising regularly is forming that lasting habit. Once you establish a habit, exercise will become second nature or even something you look forward to each day. Here are some tips to help create an exercise routine you can carry with you beyond just the early stages.

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Choose activities you enjoy

The key to creating a lasting fitness routine is making exercise fun. Focus on what makes you feel good so you'll keep coming back day after day. Experiment with different classes, sports and activities until you find something that is a source of lasting pleasure in your life.

Try out a spin class that feels like a night out at the club, or opt for a strength training regimen like CrossFit to build muscle and make you feel strong in your everyday life. If these options don't resonate with you, outdoor activities like skiing or roller skating might be the most enjoyable way to

get exercise.

Finding a workout partner will help keep you accountable and make your workout more fun by providing a dose of social interaction. Or you could join a club sports team to build community while staying fit and having fun.

Whatever you decide, take the time to find a physical activity that brings you joy and gets your mind off work. Always take a moment to reflect on the benefits you feel after moving your body.

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Set reasonable expectations

As with any new habit, it’s always a good idea to start small. Begin with manageable, achievable tasks. The burst of resolve you get when you start off your new exercise habit can fade with time, so don’t rely on that to fuel your resolution beyond the first couple weeks.

Some exercise is always better than no exercise, so keep that in mind on days when you feel like giving up. Perhaps just taking a short walk is good enough for that day. At least you went outside and got some fresh air and movement.

Although it’s important to stick to a workout plan, don’t beat yourself up if you veer off track for a day or two. Consistency is key, so as long as you come back to the gym after a busy (or lazy) week, you have nothing to lose sleep over. Setting manageable expectations and showing yourself forgiveness when you fall short will make it more likely your fitness routine will last in the long run.

Switch it up

Doing the same exercises over and over will get boring after a

while. One common reason entrepreneurs abandon any sustained fitness endeavor is that they begin feeling stagnant in the routine of it all. Many entrepreneurs crave excitement and originality. Repetitive exercise sometimes just doesn't cut it.

If your fitness plan mostly revolves around lifting weights at the gym, try incorporating some cardio. Experiment with more adventurous activities like rock climbing, hiking or dancing, and see which kinds of activities are the most fun for you. You get the most health benefits out of combining cardio and strength training, so switch up your routine, and don't be afraid to take a rest day.

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Practice gratitude

Take a moment before or after exercising (or both) to practice gratitude for what your body can do. Movement is a blessing, and it's vital to take a few minutes out of your busy schedule to thank your body for what it has done and reflect on what you are capable of. This step is an often overlooked part of exercising that will pay dividends if you take the time to cultivate gratitude for your physical capabilities.

Remembering gratitude will increase the chances you feel good after your workout, which will, in turn, increase the odds you come back the next day to exercise again. Take a few mindful moments to thank your body for what it has done and to soak in the benefits of your physical practice.

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Make a commitment

Hire a personal trainer, or purchase a month of classes to commit to your exercise regimen. Actions speak louder than words, so put your money where your mouth is and commit to scheduling exercise into your routine.

Creating a training schedule will force you to carve out specific workout time in your business calendar and encourage you to show up on days when working out is the last thing you want to do. A personal trainer can also help you identify your fitness goals and understand areas of weakness which may need special attention.

Team sports are another effective way to find community and help you stay accountable to your fitness goals. You will be more likely to show up if other people are counting on you, so finding a community will help you stick to your fitness commitment.

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Use technology

Tapping into technology helps you keep on top of your fitness goals. Apps can help you keep track of the progress you've made and set goals for the future. Some people are motivated to beat their personal best, so keeping track of your metrics will help push you to do better next time.

You can also use one of the many fitness apps out there to see what your friends are up to and keep connected. If you like a little bit of friendly competition, you can use one of the apps to compete with your friends.

Using a fitness app not only helps you keep track of your numerical improvement (how fast you can run a mile, for example) but it also helps you recognize the physical progress

you’ve made or how much stronger you actually feel. Acknowledging that hard work will help you turn exercise into an unbreakable habit for years and years to come.

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