

Creating Sustainable Habits

To ensure you continue on your journey towards your goals, you need to make sure your exercise and eating routines are maintainable. Having unrealistic exercise routines or overly strict rules around your diet will be very hard to continue long term. Life needs to be enjoyed, full of leisure activities and chocolate, not monotonous hours of exercise and broccoli. Balance is key and this can be achieved with the right routines.

Set yourself a realistic exercise routine. It is all good and well to say you will have 6 training days a week. But when work, family and home commitments start to get in the way, that 6 days becomes hard to achieve. Start with 2 or 3 days a week. Make sure those days are solid and that you are enjoying this new habit and it is working for you. Then if you want to add more days, give it a go, but not until you have set yourself a solid routine with your other training days. Enjoy the exercise you do, and it will be easy to maintain. Make sure you continue to push yourself at every session to get stronger and fitter. Always keep your brain active when you train. Think about the muscles that are being activated during every rep. Keep it varied, keep it challenging and keep it fun.

Your diet is the most important aspect to keep maintainable. If you only eat chicken, broccoli and sweet potato forever, you will get bored, you will crave bad food and more often than not you end up bingeing on the sweet, salty and saturated fatty foods you have been trying to avoid. A better way to keep in control of your cravings and still enjoy the foods that you love is to aim for moderation. Keep your diet healthy and balanced 85% of the week and enjoy yourself for the other 15%. Enjoy a cheesecake slice with your coffee for an afternoon out with friends. Have a couple of beers with your burger and chips at the pub. Order in Chinese one night when you cannot be bothered cooking. But remember to stick to the rules of moderation. Don't have a chocolate bar Monday afternoon, followed by a packet of chips on Wednesday. Chinese Thursday night for dinner. Apple pie for dessert on Friday night and a bottle of wine with dinner on Saturday. Although you may think to yourself 'oh I have been pretty good today, this will be ok'. Over the course of a week, this all adds up to be too much. Make those indulgent times planned and deliberate. Enjoy them with zero guilt knowing that you have earned it with all the self-control and healthy eating you have had during the rest of the week. Once it is over, back to your healthy eating regime. This will ensure you do not deprive yourself of the yummy indulgent foods in life. And do not forget that healthy eating doesn't have to be the same thing day in and day out. Healthy options are everywhere so vary it up so you don't get bored.

Remember to keep at it, work hard and strive to maintain a healthy lifestyle balance with your exercise and your nutrition. This is the way to long term success and a good relationship with your body, your food and your health.