



THE ROAD TO HEALTH & WELLNESS

HEALTH TOPIC OF THE WEEK

3/4 - Consistency Over Perfection

Introduction

In a previous article, I announced taking a break from science-based topics to discuss something equally important - EPT's Partnership Principles. In an effective partnership, two people listen to each other and work together to accomplish goals. That's what we aim to achieve. To review:



EPT's part is to provide training that is:

1. Safe
2. Sound
3. Scientific
4. Sustainable



Your part is:

1. Commitment over motivation
2. Consistency over perfection
3. Combining exercise with nutrition
4. Celebration



Background

If you missed **Principle #1: Commitment over Motivation**, I encourage you to read it as a precursor to this week's follow-up topic: **Consistency over Perfection**.

In Principle #1, I empathized faithfulness over feelings. Motivation is a feeling that comes and goes. Sometimes it is strong and other times it's nonexistent. Commitment is different. It involves determination and perseverance despite your feelings.



Elite Personal Training and Fitness Solutions does not provide medical treatment or intervention. We acknowledge scientific evidence that appropriately intensive exercise and sustainable nutritional intervention can have significant impact on chronic health disorders and obesity, dramatically improving symptoms when recommendations are followed. Please visit us at Eliteptf.com for more information and to schedule your evaluation.

My parting advice was to not quit, even when you are tempted to do so. Don't worry about whether you feel motivated to exercise. Do it anyway. Motivation may be what got you started, but commitment will keep you going so that you can achieve the results you want.

Principle #2: Consistency over Perfection

Application of this principle allows you to implement the preeminent principle of remaining committed.

Many of us, me included, can adopt an "all or nothing attitude" toward exercise and proper nutrition. Perhaps you chuckled as you read this and said, "yeah, that's me." Unfortunately, this perspective doesn't serve us well. Consider the following:

Scenario #1 (small scale): You are pressed for time and have only 30 minutes. You really don't want to work out because you can't "do it right." What happens next? You'll probably decide to cancel, reschedule or train another day when you do have that full hour.



Scenario #2 (large scale): You are training regularly without missing any sessions. You're making progress and everything is going great. Then something legitimate happens and you miss a few sessions. Perhaps there's a change in your work schedule, some unexpected life circumstances or you've been ill. Now you're off track. Next thing you know you end up quitting in frustration.



Marathon Not a Sprint

How can you avoid the scenarios above? It helps to remember that you are in a marathon, not a sprint! The pursuit of health and fitness needs to be viewed as a marathon process that lasts a lifetime. Of course, you want to do everything you can to not miss your exercise sessions. But this must be tempered with the reality that it will inevitably happen.

If your schedule changes and you only have 15 minutes, then do 15 minutes of exercise. If you only have time for half a session, then you do half a session. If you need to rearrange your schedule and only get a few minutes in at lunchtime or before the end of the day, then do that. The principle is that some exercise is better than no exercise. This is true, but there is also immense value in keeping a consistent schedule.



The same applies to nutrition. People often become ensnared in rigid diets. Contrived patterns of eating that arise from being "on a diet" are unsustainable. Eventually, you will eat something that's not "on your diet". That's when you hear an all-too-common phrase: "I blew it last night and now off my diet". Again, this stems from an all or nothing mindset.

Nutrition must also be viewed as a lifetime marathon. We do not need to be on or off some sort of diet. Rather, it is important to learn to be healthy in ways that allow for regular treats or "cheat meals". This approach makes life enjoyable and proper nutrition sustainable.



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The Importance of Consistency

Adaptations

- Biologically, a lot of things happen in the body during exercise. Over time these reactions change the body to become stronger, grow, or move more efficiently.
- Different factors affect adaptations in everyone, so it's impossible to predict when these changes will occur. But being consistent with training will increase the likelihood of seeing adaptations sooner.



Injury Prevention

- Consistency in training has everything to do with injury prevention.
- Keeping a consistent workout routine helps prevent tightness in the muscles, which leads to better performance. Furthermore, the more inconsistent your exercising, the more you're likely to fatigue. Fatigue is one of the major culprits of both acute injuries and overuse injuries.



Takeaway Message

You don't need to be perfect in your training and eating patterns. That's impossible. Striving for perfection causes failure and despair. Strive for consistency instead. Maintain a schedule, even if you can only do part of the workout.

If you must legitimately miss a few sessions, don't despair. Above all, DO NOT QUIT! In a lifetime of healthy pursuits, missing a week isn't so terrible. However, having unrealistic expectations and quitting in frustration will soon derail your health.

We Are Here for You

If you're discouraged or frustrated, talk with us. Let us help you stay committed and consistent.



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