

THE CORNERSTONES

To Be and Live Your Best Fit

A STRAIGHTFORWARD
GUIDE TO HELP YOU
MOVE. EAT. PERFORM.
AND **LIVE BETTER.**

NO MATTER WHAT YOUR
DEFINITION OF BEING FIT
LOOKS LIKE.

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Introduction: Clarity

Clarity is a Precursor to Success

In this book, I'm going to present to you the four cornerstones that are equally important for achieving your best fit. Now, before we begin, it is important to know that every person, with the exception of those with any limiting medical conditions, should expect and can in fact, live and be their best fit.

However, most people are really good at making things much harder than they really are or harder than they need to be. People commonly make fitness overly complicated. So it's important to recognize those things and not make the same mistakes or continue to make the mistakes that have held you back before.

One of those things is, most people start out with a goal that is *outcome focused*. They are focused on losing a certain number of pounds or achieving a certain weight or becoming a certain dress size or waist size. While there is nothing wrong with having a goal, the problem is that it doesn't ever happen fast enough or the way they want it to. Therefore, they end up being disappointed and discouraged and quit.

It is better to put your focus where it is best applied: on behavior, understanding that it's the skills we develop that help build the habits that create the results we ultimately want. Having that focus is most supportive and sustainable because it fosters the attitude of a little more, a little better, every day. It really brings home having a positive outlook on progress being the name of the game, not perfection.

It is better to put your focus where it is best applied: on behavior

That leads to the second mistake, a commitment limitation: the *all or nothing approach*. This is where hitting goals and hitting them as quickly as you want is often not possible, and because you don't reach your goal, you end up with nothing.

One last item I want to talk about to provide clarity is the power of knowing not only what you *do* want, but also, perhaps even more importantly, what you *don't* want.

I refer to that simply as *dreams versus promises*.

Dreams are what we want to have, and they are plentiful, easy to roll off the tongue, and don't require much thought. We have a lot of them, and therefore, they don't seem to challenge us to hold ourselves to be accountable to them.

I would refer to the dreams I want to have as follows: I want to weigh X number of pounds, I want to be a certain size, I want to work out five days a week, I want to run a marathon, I want to do a triathlon, I want to look amazing in a bathing suit, I want to take my shirt off and look good at the pool with my ripped abs, and so on. Who doesn't?

On the other side, though, are promises. Promises are things we all know are non-negotiables we have to have.

Here is the key thing: ***dreams are “want to have,” and promises are “have to have.”***

Promises are things you don't break; they are things you keep, you stay consciously focused on, and you understand to be of high importance.

So, what does your best fit look like?

What does your best life look like to you?

Do yourself a favor and begin this process to gain clarity so you can begin defining the promises you will actually keep. Focus more on them than your lofty dreams.

If you keep your promises, you will begin to fulfill your dreams.

Some promises, for example, are as follows; I will work out no less than three times a week. I will do thirty minutes of activity no less than three

times a week. I will leave work and be home for dinner with the family minimum of three times a week. I will eat fast food no more than two times a week. I will take focused time on Sunday or Thursday (or any day you pick) to prepare my snacks and lunches for the week.

If you keep your promises, you will begin to fulfill your dreams

Those are the types of promises that will help you build to the success you want and achieve the results that are important to you.

If you make that your focus, I promise, you will develop long-term results that will last a lifetime. You will not fall for the short-term games or hacks that are unsustainable and most often counterproductive to the results you desire. This book is focused on four cornerstones that include fitness, nutrition, supportive nutrition, and coaching, which further includes relationships and community.

All four of those are equal parts to you achieving your best fit. So as you move forward in this book, please be sure to do two things:

(1) Apply equal attention and effort to each one of these four cornerstones. One supports the other and they are synergistic with one another.

(2) Do so with a mindset and a focus on behaviors. Doing the little things the best you can with what you've got, with where you are, consistently over time. All with a clear perspective of what your best fit looks like.

Enjoy the victories you have along the way. I promise, you will be most pleased with the direction you are heading and enjoy life each and every day to a higher level while in pursuit of your best fit.

CHAPTER 1: FITNESS

We are going to start with *fitness* as the first cornerstone, not because it is more important than the others, but because that is where most people give the greatest amount of credit. However, we are not going to start where you think, with exercise and your activity level.

I want to challenge you and present to you a vital foundation for everything you do from this point forward. That is, you must determine what your best fit looks like. To help you do that, I want to present to you an exercise that encourages and challenges you.

It is important that you do it, and you can do it.

That challenge is to create a personal fitness mission statement. To help you do that, I want to first explain what a valuable mission statement is.

A mission statement is a clear, simple statement of intent. It is what you want to do, how you want to live, what you want to guide your food, fitness, and wellness choices every day. To determine what your fit looks like, it's critically important to determine what's important to you.

Now, you are not following some external rules made by someone else. It is not the images of what the world tell us fit looks like while not telling the whole story for how that person achieved it. Putting you in a box or unrealistic place where you are trying to look like someone who works out for a for a living; has no responsibility for anyone else but themselves, has a personal chef, or is on some show for some period of time where that is all they do and they leave their family at home in order to do it.

Those are the kinds of images we fight against because they cause us to unfairly compare ourselves. Again, comparing oneself is of no value. You can only be honest with yourself, and the only way you can be honest

with yourself is to find what is important to you and have a set plan in place to achieve it. What you get to do and what I get to do is wake up every morning and stay consistent and focused on it. If we are not, then we have no one else to blame but ourselves.

Wake up every morning and stay consistent and focused on it

A fitness mission statement is an opportunity to start to be accountable to yourself and your body. You are the boss, and you have to report to you. This is best done one step at a time.

To help you start developing your mission statement I'm going to give you a couple of very simple steps. Again, it doesn't have to be done exactly like this, but hopefully, this gets you thinking, and you can identify another process that may work better for you. Take your time. This process can take an hour or a day or a couple of weeks, months, years, your life. It evolves, it changes, and I really think this is best done by inserting the question, planting that seed, and beginning to jot down the things that are important to you.

Apply sustained thinking to this process. This is important, and I don't believe very many people do it. When wanting to live their best fit, people often just rush to the amount of exercise they are going to do.

That is why we are starting here, because I don't want that to happen to you. Don't just start thinking, "Increase my activity, decrease my calorie intake, start some supplement program," and then just have at it. *That is not how it is done for the long term.*

Take your time. Don't rush it, don't feel you have to get it all at once, and be open to change. A mission statement, by the way, isn't forever. You can always change it as you change and your life changes. Writing a mission statement simply gives the question quality thought, and this is

important. This gives you the beginning placement of the most valuable resource in playing the self-discovery game a little today and each day. Each and every day, self-discovery is such a helpful game to play and win for it fosters accountability to oneself.

So, how do you make a fitness mission statement? Well, you need to start to get curious about yourself.

Step One, ask yourself some questions. Think about your identity, your values, priorities. Ask, who am I and who have I become? Who do I want to be and why? What do I stand for and why? What is meaningful and important to me? Where do I want to go? What fitness, nutrition, and health behaviors would get me there? How do I know if I am making progress? If I were to have total control of my own health and nutrition path, what would that look like? What do I truly enjoy?

You need to start
to get curious
about yourself

Again, you don't have to do this all at once, but give this some thought and begin this process. Have a note-taking session and try writing the answers to these questions on whatever you have in hand, or on your phone. Alternatively, you can do this on a whiteboard, somewhere you can see it, so you can continue to build on it. Sometimes, it can help to see the list in front of you.

If you like, you can also ask someone else what they think your answers would be. I promise you, that is often a fascinating conversation.

Step two, look for the things that reappear. As you get started, just have fun with this and see what common ideas start to emerge. For instance, being a parent is important to me. My profession is incredibly important to me. I love what I do, I love helping other people. I want to be the best

at what I do and achieve excellence. I like winning, I like learning, and I sure like having fun.

Begin to look for those recurrent themes that appear in your answers, and see if you can capture the essence of what is there. Then see if you can capture the who, what, why, where, and how in a few simple, clear sentences that relate to your health, fitness, and nutrition. When you do, you'll have created *a mission statement*.

Here is what mine is: I am a father, husband, business leader, and coach. I care for other people and help them improve and grow. I keep my body healthy and fit and share my knowledge and experience with others. I ensure that I live my values, foster integrity, and serve as an example to my family and clients. I am dedicated to my personal growth and development. I am driven to be the best I can be and eager to take on a new challenge. My nutrition and training fuels my pursuit of excellence. Every gram of protein I eat and rep I perform help me win today and prepare me to win again tomorrow. I am focused and intentional, joyful and grateful.

This statement should give you an idea of who you are, what your health, nutrition, or fitness means to you, and how you can live those ideals in your daily life.

Begin the process—just get started. Have some fun with it, and develop and practice consistently. Let it be the point of focus for you, the goals you have for yourself, and the fitness results you want to achieve.

Now when it comes to exercise and getting your body moving, it's paramount that you know this; whatever you are choosing to do, do what you can, where you are at, how you can, with what you have. Be encouraged to know that exercise is cumulative. We are all very busy, we have limited time, and we aren't in the most perfect situation on a

consistent basis. That is fine, and you are fine. Just begin to move and then do it again however you can.

For example, maybe before work you can get up early and do some jumping jacks and push-ups. This will give you ten minutes of activity before you start your routine to head out for the day. Then maybe you can take ten minutes of your lunch hour and walk around your office, your building, wherever you are. If you work from home, just get outside and maybe go shoot some baskets or walk around the block.

When you come home, maybe you and your spouse can do something together with your kids. My point is that you can take ten-to fifteen-minute chunks at a time to achieve that thirty to sixty minutes of activity in a day.

Be strengthened by knowing it is not all or nothing. Exercise is cumulative, there are great benefits to be had from it, and you don't want to be putting expectations on yourself that are not achievable.

Next in your exercise focus is to make sure it challenges you. There are three variables to your exercise efforts.

Number one is *duration*. This is the amount of time you have to work out or exercise. Let's be honest, people have limitations on time, but you won't get very far on your goals if you don't plan to be active on a consistent basis.

**There are three
variables to your
exercise efforts;
Duration, Frequency, &
Intensity**

Number two is *frequency*. That refers to how often you exercise. Depending on where you are in life and what kind of time you have available, this can be a challenge.

Number three is *intensity*. Intensity refers to the amount of work completed in the time you have. The volume of work and capacity of work is the benefit of intensity. You set the amount of time you have available to exercise, and you look to get the most from whatever activity that is.

You can apply greater intensity in anything you do. For example, if you normally do a five-block walk in twenty minutes, then maybe you do five and a half the next time, and six the next time. You can walk at a more intentional pace, at a greater intensity, so you get more done in the same amount of time. It is as simple as that. This is true for virtually any and all activity.

For something like resistance training, you would use a heavier weight or a heavier resistance and minimize your rest time between sets. You can also pair up different body parts, so you don't do just a back movement and rest for ninety seconds before you repeat the exercise. Instead, you can do agonistic and antagonistic work, where you do one back movement followed by a chest movement, so you are not wasting time waiting before completing your next set for your back exercise. You are moving at a quicker pace, you are moving more weight, and you are accomplishing a greater volume in the same period of time.

The key to the intensity variable is that it should challenge you no matter what exercise you are doing.

You don't just clock in and clock out and think, "I did my twenty minutes," or, "I did my thirty minutes," and not give a concerted effort or intentionally try to accomplish more in the same amount of time.

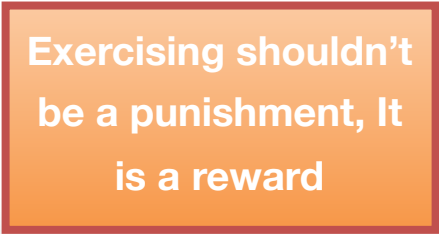
Make sure it challenges you. Don't fall prey to doing the same activity at the same pace for the same amount of time, without challenging yourself

and your body. If you don't make use of the intensity variable, you will find your results to be lacking and disappointing.

We all know what happens when that becomes the case: the exercise becomes work, it is not fun, and you don't want to do it any longer—and then, you won't.

This brings me to the next point: make sure you are having fun. Be sure to choose exercise activities you enjoy. Exercising shouldn't be a punishment. It is a reward. An opportunity to awaken the mind, clear your thoughts, be sharper in your focus, and get the endorphins released. It makes for far more productive thought, actions, and results.

High-intensity exercise, by the way, is absolutely the best, and as I have shared, it can be applied in really any modality. Increasing the intensity optimizes hormones, increases fat burning, increases and supports muscle building, helps regulate blood sugar levels, increases lung capacity, and improves heart health, amongst so many other benefits.



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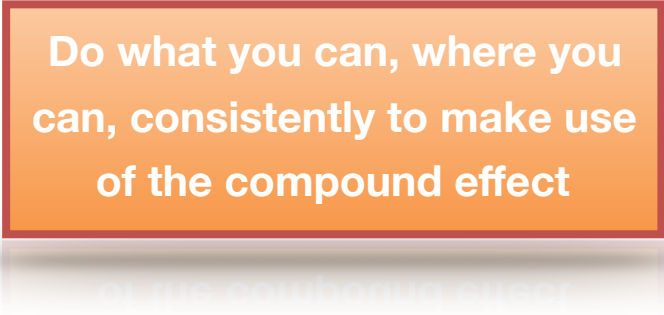
The last point for the cornerstone of *fitness* is this: **show up and be consistent**. Take advantage of what is true in all areas of life, which is no different in fitness: the *compound effect*.

The *compound effect* is the positive results that occur from doing the small things over and over again. This means doing what you can, where you can, making sure it challenges you, and focusing on intensity to get the most out of it.

It also means having fun so you are consistent, and get the most return on your time and effort. When doing the small things consistently over time,

very few people see the improvements immediately, so be aware, change doesn't happen overnight.

Anything worth doing requires consistent effort, so don't fall prey to that unrealistic thinking, and embrace the compound effect by giving yourself the chance to succeed.



Do what you can, where you
can, consistently to make use
of the compound effect

Over time those daily efforts will produce great results that everybody will see and want, and you will be happy with. Finally, don't forget to enjoy every moment of your fitness journey. *Celebrate the smallest of victories and focus on making progress every day, not trying to be perfect.*

CHAPTER 2: NUTRITION

The second cornerstone to being and living your best fit is *nutrition*. There are endless types of diets—keto, intermittent fasting, paleo, or macros—and they all can work. They just don't work for everybody and they don't work all the time. You have to consider your personal schedule. Ask yourself not only what you *can* do, but what you *will* do and do consistently.

Keeping true to your fitness mission statement, you also need to be honest with yourself about what's most important to you. If you want to have the body of a bikini model or have shredded abs to show off your 8 pack, then a life with little social outings, hours and hours of training, and constant meal prepping is how most of your days will be.

If feeling good, physically performing well, and being confident in your body is what speaks to you; then establishing a quality routine, with a few guardrails, and a sensible plan is how most of your days will be.

Whatever the case may be, the best diet to follow actually is the one that's best for you.

Next, we need to understand the goal of good nutrition and what it does for us. See, the food we eat is composed of a variety of nutrients, some known and some unknown. The most well-known and abundant nutrients are *macronutrients*, which are proteins, carbohydrates, and fats.

Food also contains smaller, less abundant nutrients—*micronutrients*—such as water, vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients. Each of these classes of nutrients is important for physiological function. Good nutrition obviously improves our health and our body composition and can improve our performance.

Good nutrition means your body gets all the nutrients, vitamins, and minerals it needs to work at its best. This makes for solid reasons to plan your meals and snacks to include quality nutrients and foods that are also low in calories.

Speaking of calories, it is important to know that different types of calories can cause different responses in the body. For example, 100 calories from fiber will produce a different response in your body than 100 calories from chicken breasts.

In addition, the same amount of calories are not always the same, and will produce a different result. For example, if you have two people that are twins and they eat 2,000 calories per day, but one eats the calories in lean proteins, fruits, and vegetables from clean, quality sources, and the other one, with the same genetic makeup, eats the same amount of calories but in donuts, refined sugars, and pastries, they would look quite a bit different. They would also have an entirely different body composition, and different health risk factors.

It is not as simple as the total number of calories consumed, because not all calories are the same

It is not as simple as the total number of calories consumed, because not all calories are the same.

The volume of food and the frequency of food are also important factors. Yes, you can still have your cake and eat it too. Eating a slice of cake once a week is certainly fine, and won't derail your progress. But if you eat a whole cake every day for a month, any positive results will be hard to come by.

These are all factors we must consider when applying our efforts to improve our nutrition. Just because most carbohydrate foods eventually

become glucose molecules, most protein foods become amino acids, and most triglycerides become fatty acids, it doesn't mean the quality of food we eat is unimportant for health, performance, and body composition.

Indeed, the higher the food quality, the better the physiological response during the digestive, absorptive, and nutrient delivery process. Anyone who suggests otherwise might as well claim that the taste of food doesn't matter since it all ends up in the same place. That's absurd!

This also leads to one of the biggest reasons people fail in their efforts to lose weight or manage their best fit: the advice to simply eat less and move more.

The problem with the advice of eat less and move more is that it doesn't make a distinction between calories. When total calorie count is your only goal you'll end up consuming lower quality calories than you should, which leads to mindless eating and malnutrition.

Educate yourself on healthy calories versus nutritionally void calories. A great rule of thumb is that calories that are created in nature are always superior to calories created in a factory.

To help you understand the key macronutrients, what they are, and what role they play, I want to discuss each one with you briefly.

The first is *carbohydrates*. Carbohydrates are the sugars, starches, and fibers found in fruits, grains, vegetables, and milk products. They are important to a healthy life. Carbohydrates provide fuel for the central nervous system and energy for working muscles. They also prevent protein from being used as an energy source and enable fat metabolism.

There are two types of carbohydrates, simple and complex, that you should be aware of and understand the differences in. The differences

between the two forms are their chemical structure and how quickly the sugar is absorbed and digested. Generally speaking, simple carbohydrates are digested and absorbed more quickly than complex carbs. Simple carbohydrates just contain one or two sugars. They are sugars like fructose, which is found in fruits, and galactose, which is found in milk products. The single sugars are called *monosaccharides*. Carbs with two sugars, such as sucrose (table sugar) or lactose (from dairy) and maltose (found in beer and some vegetables), are called *disaccharides*.

Single carbs are also in candy, soda, and syrups. However, these foods are made with processed and refined sugars and do not have vitamins, minerals, or fiber. They are called *empty calories* and can lead to weight gain. This is precisely the point in the 2,000-calorie example of how not all calories are created equal, and they do not cause the same responses in the body, in particular, in our metabolism in digestive and nutrient uptake processes.

Complex carbohydrates (polysaccharides) have three or more sugars. They are often referred to as starchy foods and include beans, peas, lentils, peanuts, potatoes, corn, parsnips, and whole-grain breads and cereals. It is best to focus on getting primarily complex carbohydrates into your diet, including vegetables.

People have a perception that carbs are the enemy, and there is nothing further from the truth. Our body needs them, thrives on them, and they are important for the reasons I have just shared. I want to encourage you to understand that it is not about fewer carbs, it is just about smarter carbs.

It is not about fewer
carbs, it is just about
smarter carbs

Below, I've given you a list that breaks down the difference between a good carb versus a bad carb, so you can become more aware of the choices you are making.

Again, the body thrives on carbs and needs them for performance, recovery, and brain function. Carbohydrates are the body's main fuel source.

We just happen to eat way too many of them, and in most cases, that leads to us gaining weight.

Good/Smart carbs are as follows:

- Low or moderate in calories
- High in nutrients
- Void of refined sugars and refined grains
- High in naturally-occurring fiber
- Low in sodium, low in saturated fat
- Very low or devoid of cholesterol and trans fat

Bad carbs are not-so-smart carbs that are as follows:

- High in calories
- Full of refined sugars, like corn syrup, white sugar, honey, and fruit juices
- High in refined grains, like white flour
- Low in many nutrients
- High in fiber

- High in sodium
- Sometimes high in saturated fat, cholesterol, and trans fat

The more refined carbohydrates have almost no fiber or beneficial nutrients, unlike smarter carbs, which have value for our body. When you eat refined carbs, you don't feel full, pleasantly satisfied, or well-nourished. You often just feel kind of lousy, and worse, you often want more.

Leave these foods for special occasions like dessert after a fancy restaurant meal, snacks at a special party, or a slice of cake on your birthday. Then eat them slowly and enjoy them.

Just keep it simple—**more fiber and nutrients plus whole foods equal more value — smart.**

Less fiber, and fewer nutrients plus processing equal less value — not so smart.

Always look to add more value to your diet. Today, just think about how you can make your carbs a little bit smarter.

How could you move just one step along the path to making healthier options? One smart question to ask when in doubt is, are these carbs adding any value to my body? Are they fueling me or filling me?

If the answer is yes, that is a smart carb choice.

Here are five fresh ideas of often under-appreciated smarter carbs that you can try incorporating into your diet: beans and legumes, sweet potatoes, whole grains, sprouted grains, and steel-cut oats.

**Are these carbs adding
any value to my body?
Are they fueling me or
filling me?**

The second macronutrient I want to talk about is protein. Protein helps synthesize hormones, including hormones that make us happy and relaxed. Protein supports our immune system, boosts our metabolism, and helps us lose fat and stay lean for life.

Protein also helps us feel more satisfied with our meals, which is important if you are trying to lose weight. Most importantly, protein helps build and repair almost any tissue in our body, including our muscles and connective tissues such as tendons, ligaments, and bones.

More protein means better recovery, more muscle, less fat, and a stronger, healthier body.

By the way, it is important to note that both carbohydrates and proteins provide 4 calories of energy per 1 gram. If a slice of wheat bread has 20 grams of carbohydrates, you multiply that by 4, and that is 80 calories.

For the rest of the list of benefits of protein it is important to note that protein is king when it comes to; your body composition, lean muscle development, and becoming the more fit image most people want to be in their own bodies.

A big reason for people's inability to reach their goals is that most North American diets are very low in protein and very high in carbohydrates, hence the bad rap carbohydrates get.

This can easily be reversed by being conscious of the type of carbohydrates you consume while increasing the quality protein sources you have on a daily basis. Animal proteins such as meat, poultry, egg, fish, milk, and cheese rank the highest on the protein measures, while plant proteins rank lower.

For those following a plant-based diet, which is becoming wildly more common, it is very important to eat protein every day. As long as the

following requirements are met, protein intake can be adequate on a plant-based regimen.

You need enough energy to sustain a lean body when intake is lower during periods of fat loss. Consuming a protein supplement during these times could be extremely important and valuable. What you don't want to do is try to build a diet around cereals, grains, and processed foods, which are often lower in amino acids or have important nutrients processed out.

Again, if you are following a plant-based diet, you don't just eat fruit. You also include a diversity of plants including vegetables, legumes, nuts, seeds, and tubers that contain or provide some protein. You also want to include close to one cup of beans and legumes each day.

For protein-powered foods, here is what I recommend as quality choices: lean meat such as beef, pork, and raw game; poultry such as chicken, turkey, or duck; fish and seafood such as shrimp or scallops; eggs and egg whites, cottage cheese, or plain yogurt; protein powder such as whey, egg, vegetarian blends, etc.; and cooked lentils or beans, tempeh, or tofu. Of course, other foods have some protein, but the foods I have listed are the high-protein superstars.

Just pick the food you like and work toward being consistent

Don't worry about the best protein or being perfect, like we have already talked about. There is no such thing! Just pick the food you like and work toward being consistent.

The third and final micronutrient is *fat*.

Fats provide an energy source, as fat is the most energy-dense macronutrient. It provides 9 calories of energy per 1 gram.

Dietary fat has six major roles:

1. It provides an energy source.
2. It helps manufacture and balance hormones.
3. It forms our cell membranes.
4. It forms our brains and nervous systems.
5. It helps transport the fat-soluble vitamins and micronutrients of A, D, E, and K.
6. It provides two essential fatty acids. The word *essential* is critical because essential means that our body cannot naturally produce them, and they must be acquired through diet. The two essential fatty acids that the body can't make are linoleic acid, an omega-6 fatty acid, and linolenic acid, an omega-3 fatty acid.

To access and ensure your diet is getting quality amounts of healthy fats, you should look more to the unsaturated types of fat, monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fat. Great sources are olive oil, avocado, peanuts, pecans, and almonds, in the monounsaturated category; and omega-3 and omega-6, flax, hemp, fish, canola, and sunflower in the polyunsaturated category.

However, of specific importance is focusing on omega-3s. Amazing sources of omega-3 include wild salmon, grass-fed beef, algae oils, sardines, brussels sprouts, cauliflower, walnut, and flax seeds.

Now we have a basic understanding of the macronutrients—what they are and the role they play. Next I want to provide you with five healthy habits. This is where the rubber meets the road, and I cannot express how important this is to achieving your desired results.

Again, as I mentioned, it really comes down to changing our psychology: the changes we want to make come down to the skills we identify that need to be developed to build the habits that are the driving force to create the results we want.

We are all defined by the habits we create, right? Those habits are built by the skills we develop. The habits and the positive changes you seek are simple to make, but my encouragement to you is to pick one out and then choose to focus on it until you own it.

What I mean by this is that when you get to a point, ask yourself, am I really doing that or has that habit become me? Think of it on a scale of 1 to 10; 10 means without question or hesitation, I have got it; I don't need to think about it anymore. When you are at that point, you own it.

Do yourself a favor, don't try to take each one of these on all at once. If they are new to you now, pick one and build on it. Work on it and turn it into a habit of excellence. *Then and only then, look to incorporate another habit.*

**Pick one out and then
choose to focus on it
and own it**

Number one is very simple and not complicated. This is what I said at the beginning: don't make things more difficult than they need to be. Living and being your best fit is an expectation you should definitely have and a way of living you can achieve just by doing these five things.

- 1. Eat slowly, and stop at 80 percent full. Minimize nutrition gaps greater than four hours, if you decide that is what works best for you.** In my opinion, with the thousands of clients I have worked with, eating frequent small meals throughout the day, keeping your body consistently fed and fueled, builds a sustainable routine that is practical and easier to adhere to. You might choose to do something

different, like intermittent fasting. This is the name some nutrition experts give to the practice of occasionally going for extended periods without eating: usually 12 to 18 hours in a day. If that works for you, that is fine. Whatever you choose, you want to eat slowly, stop at 80 percent full, and give your brain time to understand that your body is full.

2. **Eat protein-dense food with each meal.** We just spoke about the macronutrients and that protein is king to the body. The common goals most of us have are that we want to look, feel, and perform our best. No matter what your goals are, eating protein at every meal is one of the most important habits you can have. We will talk about how much to eat in just a moment, but the first rule still applies no matter what: eat slowly and stop at 80 percent full. When should you eat protein? Early and often. Have a solid serving of protein with breakfast. This will help control your appetite all day long. Imagine, no more afternoon or night-time munchies. That is the power of protein. As for how much? The general calculation is .6 to .8 grams per pound of bodyweight. For example, at 150 lbs. a moderately active female would benefit from 90 to 105 grams of protein per day. The more active you are, the more you may lean toward the higher end of the range. Men engaged in high-intensity training or competition may benefit from a slightly higher amount; .8 to 1 gram per pound of bodyweight.
3. **Eat vegetables with each meal.** Think of the rainbow and try to get as many colors as you can; get green, red, orange, and purple from vegetables like broccoli, spinach, red peppers, tomatoes, winter squash, pumpkin, carrots, yellow beets, purple eggplant, purple cabbage, fresh black currants. *The goal here is simple: to eat vegetables for every snack or meal you have.* Conservatively start with three servings a day, and work up to four or five depending on

how many snacks or meals you are having. A key note is that when you hear “eat five to seven servings a day,” which is often stated, most people eat far more fruits than they eat vegetables. Just be aware that fruits provide a large number of carbohydrates.

Carbohydrates aren’t bad, but if your personal goal is to look great, feel great, and have a low body composition, then you need to be aware of the number of carbohydrates you are consuming.

Knowing, for example, that a medium-sized apple would provide 25 grams of carbohydrates, you can see that if you are having three or four servings of fruits and fewer vegetables, that can add up over time really quickly. Again, it is all about your individual needs and goals, but it is something to be aware of. *Eat more vegetables than fruits, and try to incorporate them as healthy habits at each and every meal.*

Eat more vegetables than fruits, and try to incorporate them as healthy habits at each and every meal

4. Build on smarter carbs for fat loss and a lower body composition.

If you are looking for a trimmer body with more lean muscle, then you want to eat the majority of your carbohydrates after you exercise or first thing in the morning. The reason is that carbohydrates are the most important energy source for your body. Carbohydrates are not bad. We just want to make smart choices, and the timing of which we eat them can affect our body and the results we achieve. Earlier in the day is when our body is going to best utilize that energy source, and it is certainly not going to have any left available at the end of the day to be stored as fat if it went unused. That is one of the many great reasons to fill your body with complex, energy-rich carbohydrates at the beginning of the day

from that smarter carb choices. The second great time to carb up is after a high-intensity workout. Again, this depends on you and your exercise of choice, the intensity of the activity, and the duration of the activity. This determines how much muscle tissue is breaking down and your need to replenish the glycogen storage you depleted and begin the repair and recovery process.

If you do it the opposite way, like many North Americans, you will go to bed with an energy source in your body that will not be utilized as it would have been if you ate it first thing in the morning. The reason many Americans eat this way is because they work all day and haven't eaten frequently enough. When they come home they are hungry, trying to make up for gaps during the day, and stressed. Carbohydrate sources are readily available, easy to access, and usually don't require much preparation. So when we are in this state we overeat them. The negative when eating carbohydrates late in the day is that we go to bed soon after: our bodies metabolism slows down, which leaves these calories unused and turns them into fat.

5. **Eat healthy fats.** We talked about how fats are a nutrient-dense energy source. I just want to expand on that to say that healthy fats can help you get stronger, fitter, and healthier. They help you recover faster, they nourish fatty tissue like your brain, eyes, and cell membranes, and they help you absorb micronutrients and keep your muscles building. Believe it or not, healthy fats are vital and actually help quite a bit in the process of losing fat. If you get enough important fats in your daily nutrition, your hormones will stay healthy, you will keep kicking butt in the gym or your preferred exercise activities, and you will stay smart and happy because it is good for brain function. To be honest, it even makes food taste great and supports healthy skin.

If you begin to incorporate any one of these five healthy habits and then begin to build from one habit you have owned, you will immediately begin to see your food choices clean up.

Because of that renewed focus, you'll also cut out refined sugars. You will start choosing smarter carbohydrate choices, making quality protein a key and consistent part of your daily nutrition, and become proactive about choosing good-quality, healthy fats; like coconut oils and avocado and cutting out those vegetable oils. When you use your knowledge of macronutrients, you will best leverage whole-food nutrition to help you be and live your best fit.

CHAPTER 3: Supportive Nutrition

The third cornerstone of the four that are vital to your success is *supportive nutrition*. *Supportive nutrition* is nutritional supplementation and is an important part that contributes to the total package, supporting consistency and improving results.

Of course, nutritional supplements are not just proteins or performance lines of products for those that have extreme goals of gaining great size and strength, such as creatine or HMB. They also include micronutrients, like omega-3's, which we talked about earlier. These micronutrients are essential to our bodies. However, most people don't get enough of them even from whole food, even though many of them are enriched with vitamins. That is why supplementation is so important.

Nutritional supplements are very much a part of a healthy, well-rounded and complete nutrition plan. To think that you can do without them is very optimistic, and in most cases, very unrealistic.

In fact, in 2011 *The Journal of Nutrition* published a report showing that without supplements or enriched foods, the following percentages of people in the US would not get the following nutrients:

- 100% would not get enough vitamin D
- 93% would not get enough vitamin E
- 88% would not get enough folate
- 74% would not get enough vitamin A
- 51% would not get enough thymine
- 46% would not get enough vitamin C
- 22% would not get enough vitamin B6

Let me say it this way: although very few supplements are actually essential, some of the ones listed are essential given that study.

Borderline low intake of calories, micronutrients, and macronutrients is more common than you think, even in the healthiest and most disciplined, regimented, and active amongst us. Really, no kidding.

Even the healthiest people have bad nutrition days

Now, obviously some people do much better than others in this area, but even then there are slip-ups. I think we can all agree that even the healthiest people have both good and bad nutrition days, right?

Good nutrition days are perfect nutrition days when a person might be able to skip supplements. The person may have nailed it and rocked it out, gotten everything they needed. They may have hit all five of those healthy habits above.

Bad nutrition days, on the other hand, are days a person might strike out on a few of the habits. Here is the critical part: *good* means nearly perfect with nutrient timing, consistency, and source. So I ask you a very logical question: **how many good nutrition days have you had via only having whole food?**

If you have a job, a family, responsibility to anyone other than yourself to take care of and you don't have a personal chef to buy and prepare and maybe grow all your meals and snacks for the day, I am pretty confident that your "bad nutrition days" far outweigh your good ones.

It is probably fair to say that a majority of people in this country might have three to five good nutrition days per month based on the science of nutrient and metabolic needs; ten to fifteen if they are exceptional; and twenty to twenty-five if they are disciplined, committed, and basically

live on an island, have no social life or other obligations, and have a coach by their side nearly every moment helping them stay between the lines.

Now, knowing what a good day is and what a bad day is and being honest with ourselves about our nutrient needs, I think we can all agree that supportive nutrition is an important cornerstone to being and living your best fit.

Supportive nutrition ensures that you always have options available. A great nutrient strategy is having the eight elite staple supplements on hand for the ‘bad’ nutritional days that you may be able to anticipate or that you just inevitably have beyond your control from one day to the next. Having the tools and the support of nutrition on your side when this happens is a key component for being consistent, staying on the right path, and being successful.

**Supportive nutrition
ensures that you
always have options
available**

Before I share the elite eight staple supplements, I want to briefly discuss the top benefits of supportive nutrition. Supportive nutrition specifically helps you overcome deficiencies. Again, no matter how perfect and disciplined people are about eating whole foods, they are still deficient in the micronutrient areas of key vitamins and minerals.

It also helps build consistency—which is the underlying theme to each of the cornerstones. We talked about it with fitness—the compound effect and showing up and doing it. We talked about it with nutrition—picking one habit and owning it, making it consistent without even thinking about it. And the same goes for supportive nutrition.

Supportive nutrition, hence the name, supports those previous two cornerstones and further helps you be consistent.

It only takes a couple of off days and people often throw in the towel. They quit because they become discouraged and they think it is something they did wrong.

It is not your fault; life is demanding. Work and family are unpredictable. There is very little you and I can control.

That is the main reason supportive nutritional supplementation has become a staple in our way of life: because of the demands of life and how dependent on the fast food or vending machine or concession stand you are if, for example, you are a parent that has to attend many events with your kids. That doesn't lend itself to the success you want and the results you are after.

Secondly, on supplementation, there is not a shortage of products of all kinds, shapes, and sizes. The type I'm talking about is not necessarily the one with all the hyped-up claims, with the meathead on the cover with some hot chick beside him.

Buyer beware is the message here about what company you choose to put your money into for supportive nutrition.

Is supportive nutrition important? Absolutely, for the reasons we have covered. But there is a true worry and need to be careful and aware of who you choose to get your products from. There are many problems in the industry. One that comes to the top of the mind is called *pixie dusting*. This is where they put just a little bit of the ingredients you are wanting for the benefits it has. They don't include the full amount they should based on science and how much is needed for an actual benefit or to work the way they claim it does. Or, pixie dusting includes the addition of illegal or banned substances that enhance performance that should not be in the product and are not listed on the label.

Another issue is that some supplements have fillers or even allergens that cause issues for those that take them. Furthermore, a majority of products make it extremely difficult, if not impossible, for the consumer to know how much of specific ingredients are actually in the product because they lump them into what is referred to a 'Propriety Blend'.

There are many reasons for caution and concern as a consumer when buying supplements. Unfortunately, because of these issues, supportive nutrition supplementation can often cause a negative experience for people. Just know that despite the negatives, there is no doubt that proven, supportive nutrition is absolutely valuable to us for the reasons I have shared thus far, so it is worth finding quality products.

Now that you know why you need supplements and what to look out for when buying them, let's talk about the top eight supplements everybody needs. These eight supplements are perfect to have on hand to fill in the gaps on non-perfect days, to keep you on track and feeling good, and to give you the energy and focus you need to continue moving toward your goals. Here they are, in no particular order:

There is no doubt that proven, supportive nutrition is absolutely valuable for most people

1. **Protein supplement.** Why? Because of the reasons shared in the 5 healthy habits and nutrition portion. Most people are not getting near enough protein on day-to-day basis to help them achieve the goals they say are important to them.
2. **Fish oil.** You need to supplement with omega-3 fatty acids much more than omega-6 because we can get omega-6 through many of our fat sources. If, however, you are eating cold, wild game fish

three to four times a week, you are probably coming close to your omega-3 needs already.

3. **Greens.** We talked about eating plenty of vegetables and fruits and that people eat more fruits than vegetables. If you don't get the three servings of vegetables, get a nutritional supplementation product with greens. Find quality green products you can add to a morning smoothie, meal replacement shake, or protein supplement to kill two birds with one stone.
4. **Multivitamin and multi-minerals.** These help us cover our micronutrient needs at the foundational level. When those needs aren't met, we have gaps in our days that leave a lot to be desired health-wise, which causes us to fall short of our goals. We want to do our part to make sure we are getting ourselves the basic vitamins and minerals that are necessary to build a healthy body upon. Furthermore, recent studies conclude: frequent use of Multi-vitamins/multi-minerals is effective in increasing micronutrient intakes, decreasing prevalence of most nutrient inadequacies, and decreasing risk of deficiencies of vitamins B₆, B₁₂, C, and D in the U.S. adult population.
5. **Branched chain amino acids or BCAA.** Branched chain amino acids are the essential amino acids that are the building blocks of our muscle tissue. There are 20 Amino acids in total, but the branched chain amino acids are three of the best, especially leucine, in helping build muscle. This is a very important supplement for those that understand that the engine that drives one's metabolism is your lean muscle tissue—not big and bulky, but lean muscle tissue. The more lean muscle you have, the more your metabolism is burning. You want to feed the muscle tissue. As you age, especially, branched chain amino acids are incredibly important because we

inevitably lose muscle tissue. However, if we can supplement and ensure that we are getting the right amount of branched chain amino acids, we can help preserve the lean muscle tissue we have to a better degree as we endure the aging process. It not only helps you build muscles, but it also helps you maintain that precious muscle tissue that helps you have a healthy metabolism.

6. **A protein-carbohydrate drink post exercise.** This is specifically if you are working out at a high level. You are not just going through the motions; you are including that intensity variable and you are focused on it. You will have this drink preferably thirty to sixty minutes after your workout, no longer. This drink will have a 2:1 minimum or preferably 3:1 carb-to-protein ratio. You want more carbohydrates than protein after an active and intense activity bout. That allows you to begin to replenish the best you can. It is best in liquid form, so it can be absorbed readily into the bloodstream and the muscle tissue to replenish the glycogen storage you have depleted. We use up the glucose we have stored when we work out, and the carbs we intake after help us begin to repair. Again, this is a specific staple for those that are doing resistance training and breaking down muscle tissue or doing any activity at a high level.
7. **Energy.** We are all looking for healthy, vibrant energy, and a lot of us get it from sources that are very unhealthy. They often have empty calories, and are detrimental to our digestive system, such as a lot of coffee, pops, or God forbid, those energy drinks that produce a high level of gastric acids. I am not saying that coffee is bad. I am just saying that when it gets excessive, like anything else, it can cause problems. If you have three to five or more cups of coffee a day, that can harm your digestive system. Plus, if you drink it with sugar and cream, that adds to the problem. Finding a

healthy nutrient-dense source that can help increase your energy and give you vibrant focus is a vital need, and want for most adults.

- 8. Hydration & Electrolyte Replenishment.** This is particularly important if you are actively moving, sweating, for athletes, weekend warriors, etc. But it's also for everyday, where a lot of people are walking around greatly under hydrated or even dehydrated. The key however, is finding a proper product that is a real source that gives nutritional support and the replenishment of not just fluid volume, but also electrolytes. Especially in the hotter months of the year or if you are active in training, you want to replenish the electrolytes you lose through your sweat. You cannot do that with water alone, and you cannot do it with most of the popular sports drinks. They do not have what science states is needed to provide the benefits or produce the desired results.

Common sports drinks don't have a 1:1 ratio of sodium to potassium, which is what science states we need to replenish electrolytes. You can turn any label over, and most sports drinks are 4:1 sodium to potassium. In fact, they don't even have the other two electrolytes, which are responsible for anti-cramping: calcium and magnesium. And we can't ignore the amount of sugar many versions of sport drinks contain. This is another one of those buyer beware scenarios. Because adults and kids drink these like water, I see this as a larger problem, and encourage you to strengthen your knowledge and choose carefully.

The elite eight staple supplements are wise to have on hand for non-perfect days in life

Those are the elite eight staple supplements that are wise for each of us to have on hand for those non-perfect days in our life. One of those eight, if not all, would be a great value to you.

Now that you know the value and benefits of supportive nutrition, the problems in the industry, and the top nutritional supplements to have on hand, next you need to assess your needs.

Take a look at what you are missing in your days: the micronutrients, how you start your day, the long gaps between meals, skipping lunch or working through lunch, not having healthy snack options to grab easily to keep you on point, your energy needs and where your focus is, your health goals, and your ultimate gain.

What is important to you? You know what you are lacking and what you are looking for, and that is the very next step and the most important to living your best fit.

CHAPTER 4: Coaching & Community

The fourth and final cornerstone to living and being your best fit is *coaching*. *Coaching* consists of relationships, a community, and your environment. Even the best of us that are the most disciplined and have tremendous willpower need to know that both discipline and willpower will eventually fail over time.

Every top performer, every high achiever, anyone that is being and living their best in anything they are doing understands the great value and importance of building and fostering an environment for high performance.

High performance is relative to each and every person. The importance is on the environment and understanding its ability to lift us up or knock us down. Without question, the top two reasons people fall short in achieving their best health and fitness goals is a lack of consistency and a lack of accountability.

Therefore it's important to be aware if the environment you operate in, and the people that surround you, are anchors or accelerators to your life and the person you are.

A great coach helps
you become the
person you are
capable of becoming
and want to be

This is exactly why and where a coach becomes incredibly important. You see, a great coach helps people become the person they have always believed they could be.

Every great athlete you know or have heard of, from Michael Jordan to Michael Phelps, has had coaches every step of the way. Why? Because it helps them be consistent and accountable, but also because a coach

helps you see things you cannot see, because you always see it the one way, through your eyes and your own capacities.

A coach can bring things to your attention and provide support and encouragement, suggestions, and new thoughts and ideas.

Thinking you can achieve your best of anything without having someone or some group of people in your life that can coach you is definitely wishful thinking.

By believing this, you are being shortsighted and setting yourself up to fail and potentially feel like you are less than because you couldn't do it.

So stop that. Don't begin this journey with the thought that you can do this on your own. *Quite frankly, you cannot, and you will not achieve your very best if you try to do it yourself.*

You can start out strong, you can go faster by yourself, but you are going to burn out and fall short. **You can go farther, achieve much more, and sustain longer if you have someone or some group of people in your corner.**

A coach is going to provide you three important things that you can't do on your own:

1. **Give you accountability.** A coach will give positive-handed pressure, a hug around your neck, and a kick in your butt when you need it. They will celebrate your victories and call you out on your crap.
2. **Provide support.** They will keep you consistent, provide inspiration, and challenge you to keep stretching. They will push you toward the potential you have and challenge you to keep striving forward. If you are doing it by yourself, you can become complacent. Please

make note of this right now; it may be the one thing that sticks with you and changes your thinking forever. ***Complacency is the default character trait of every human being, not urgency.*** A coach gives you a supportive environment that can keep urgency at the top of your mind.

3. **Educate you.** Obviously, growing your knowledge builds your competence, learning, and development, expanding your personal awareness and expectation for achievement. I want to give you a key example for increasing your personal awareness. I call it “Win the Day.” It is a simple but also powerful three-step system that you can activate right now that will positively help you make the progress you desire. This can and will be applied to any and all areas of your life you wish to improve, especially in your health and in your fitness. However, being aware is not enough. You have to collect and document those things where you see them and read them. Then you have to think about them further and have a simple system for learning and benefiting from your observations. This is where the addition of a coach and a support team would be most advantageous to helping you achieve it.

Win the Day

As the late Jim Rohn, a well-known author and leadership development person said, “Don’t leave your better future to your memory.”

This exercise encourages you to do something you probably aren’t doing that is very easy to do but is also easy not to do. If you do it, I promise you will win the day each and every day. You will start to think differently, act differently, and expect more.

You will start to think
differently, act differently,
and expect more

The first step is to identify and decide what tool you will use for the exercise—a journal, notepad, computer, tablet, or notes app on your phone—and where and how you will use it. Then complete these three steps daily:

1. **Ask yourself, what did I learn today?** This simple question does two incredibly important things for you. One, it opens your mind to the opportunities around you. Two, it produces expectations for progress. This immediately impacts your thoughts and focus with increased awareness and the expectant mind. When you do this, you are less likely to drift or just get by in your day.
2. **Notice and articulate your answer.** This step is where the real magic happens. This step is one most people do not do consistently because it is not always easy. It can sometimes take a few more minutes, but it provides two incredibly important benefits as well. One, it helps in self-discovery. Two, it facilitates the greater process for determining how it applies to your life, behaviors, habits, and goals. This helps you know where you are right now in pursuit of where you want to be.
3. **Answer the question, did I win the day?** This is a simple yes or no. Either you did move forward and make progress today, or you remained the same and flat-out lost. This is the moment of truth; it is just looking in the mirror with nobody else around. You can choose to lie to yourself, but you know that won't do you any good. This step provides self-evaluation, a clear method to track and measure yourself, and ultimately helps you stay focused on consistent progress. This is the quintessential ***you can run but you can't hide from yourself exercise that when practiced reveals the items you want and need to achieve the goals that are important to you.***

Success is the result of taking what appears to be complex and making it simple. When it is simple, it gets done, practiced, and repeated, which builds skills that develop habits that ultimately create results.

As you move forward on your fit journey and you consider the information provided here, don't minimize the benefit and role a positive and strong community can provide for you.

The encouraging environment, the strong associations, the people you are intentionally and deliberately choosing to spend more time with and those you are deliberately choosing to spend less time with all have an impact on your success. You have to put yourself in a place that facilitates your growth and progression toward your goals.

As you have probably figured by now, I am not here to tell you what to do. Instead, I am here to help you figure out what works best for you. You don't need to be a doctor or scientist to do this. What you need to do is pay attention to you, your environment, the choices you make, and the people you associate with.

**Put yourself in a place
that facilitates your
growth and progression**

As we wrap up these four cornerstones to be and live your best fit, I want you to think about what you want and need. Think about what your goals are and what is important to you. The more you learn about yourself and think about what you want and need, the more (good) decisions you will make.

This is especially true because your body, goals, and priorities will evolve. For instance, you can't lose weight forever; at some point you will have to change gears. As you start to make changes in your life, it becomes increasingly important for you to become a good decision maker.

Although we think we are pretty logical as human beings, we usually make decisions based on impulse, in a split second, and they are often subconscious decisions. What is around us, such as our physical environment or what people are doing, emotions, beliefs, and assumptions that may or may not be true, all play roles.

Conversely, we almost never decide to do things by slowly and carefully examining all the evidence beforehand. You are not necessarily trying to make the perfect decision, especially because almost all important choices actively prevent perfect decisions. You are trying to make the most conscious and intentional decision. A decision that fits you and your best goals, a decision made with purpose, wisdom, full knowledge, and clarity.

How about that for a coaching moment?

CONCLUSION

As we close the book, I want you to understand that the secret to lasting success and long-term results is in identifying the limiting factors and building skills to establish positive behaviors to develop healthy habits.

Limiting factors are the things that stand between you and reaching your goals. They are usually a weakness, something that is holding you back, a thorn in your side that continually pops its ugly head up and sabotages your continued progress.

The first step is to identify what those limiting factors are. If we are being real, there is definitely more than one; the key is to identify the one that seems to be popping up the most and attack it first. Once you have overcome it, move on to the next one, attacking them one at a time. The way to overcome them is to think through what skill you can start developing to help build a habit that would ultimately help you eliminate that limiting factor.

Once you complete that process and begin attacking that limiting factor, you will begin to expose your mind to so many opportunities and notice things around you that were always there but you were always blind to.

Doing a little bit more, a little bit better, and improving yourself every day

You will begin to move in a positive direction, doing a little bit more, a little bit better, and improving yourself every day. You will be in alignment with the very thing we started this book with: having clarity for where you want to go, for what you want to achieve, and what is most important to you.

You will begin to develop and have a clear understanding of promises and dreams. You will then understand what is a better choice based on what you have around you. You will stop beating yourself up when things don't go as planned. You will have confidence in handling and responding positively to the uncontrollable that often happens and what would constitute a bad nutrition day.

You will be more consistent because you have the support of supplementation in hand to help fill those gaps, plug those holes, and overcome what would have been a limiting occasion.

You will ultimately start heading in a clear direction toward the picture and image of what success looks like for you. You will begin writing your own winning story and not buying what everyone else is telling you it should be.

You will stop comparing your success with what others tell you and start defining what success is to you. And you will be excited about the pursuit of achieving it and enjoying every step along the way.

One final note to encourage you: Success is achieving progress in the direction you want to go. It is not defined by having a six-pack stomach; it is having a core strong enough to crawl on the floor with your kids and your grandkids so their laughter is right in your ear.

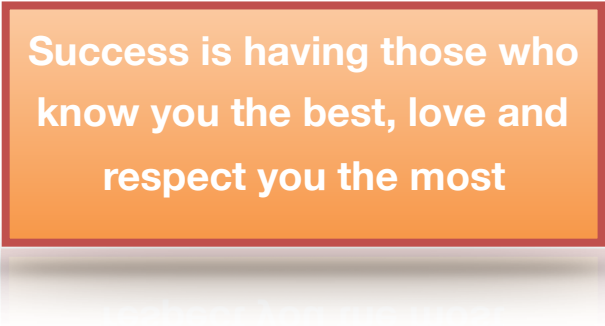
Success is not having 6 percent body fat; it is being healthy enough that you have more energy, focus, and drive during the day with some energy left over for your family when you get home from work at night.

Success is not cranking out a hundred push-ups and posting it to Facebook; it is about being a tad better than last week.

Success is not being miserable and forcing yourself to eat kale and counting calories every time you eat; it is finding that balance of fueling your life and exploring without the guilt.

Success is not living in a gym; it is being an example to others by taking care of yourself.

Success is not measured by the scale; it is measured by being able to take the stairs without being exhausted.



**Success is having those who
know you the best, love and
respect you the most**

Success is not looking and being like the world thinks you should. It's having those who know you the best, love and respect you the most.

Success is about doing the best you can and committing yourself to getting a little better every day. Be yourself, but be your best self.

I wish you all the best, and I look forward to helping you any way I can along your Fit journey.

For The Win,

Brock Meadows