

# canfitpro™

September/October 2019

The Official Magazine

## 2019 FITNESS PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR WINNERS

canfitpro  
OVERCOMING  
A DANGEROUS  
SQUAT

FITNESS  
GAMES  
FOR KIDS

CAN  
YOU EAT  
ACCORDING  
TO YOUR  
GENES?

YOGA FOR  
WINTER-  
WEATHER  
SPORTS

OWNER  
INTENT:  
HOW DO  
YOU  
MEASURE  
SUCCESS?



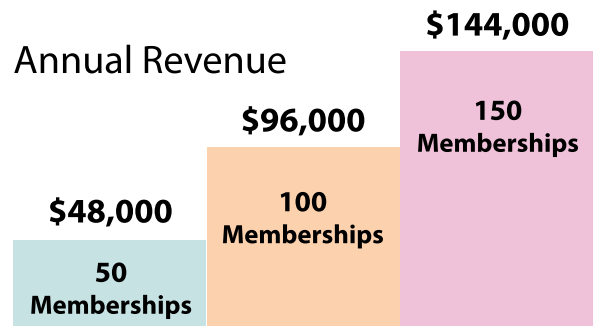
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# CONTENTS



40



28



32



18



50



22

## ON THE COVER 18

### 2019 FITNESS PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR WINNERS!

Meet Lisa Mastracchio, Fitness Instructor Specialist of the Year and Laura Jackson, Personal Training Specialist of the Year

## 22 OWNER INTENT: HOW DO YOU MEASURE SUCCESS?

Be a more effective leader of yourself and others by defining your owner intent

## 28 CAN YOU EAT ACCORDING TO YOUR GENES?

How nutrigenomics is revolutionizing personalized nutrition

## 32 FITNESS GAMES FOR KIDS

Relays are a fun and effective way to help kids participate in interval training

## 40 OVERCOMING A DANGEROUS SQUAT

Correcting movement compensation with assessment and corrective programming

## 50 YOGA FOR WINTER-WEATHER SPORTS

Limit injuries with a series of postures to counteract long periods of forward flexion

## FEATURES

### 21 INSURANCE COVERAGE THAT'S EASY & AFFORDABLE

A simple and quick online application lets you get back to making people move

### 26 LESSONS LEARNED

Practical tips to building and maintaining your fitness career

### 31 TANDOORI MASALA STUFFED EGGPLANT

### 34 WORKING PREGNANT AND MAKING A COME BACK!

10 tips to help pregnant fitness pros balance their careers and motherhood

### 36 EQUITY IN FITNESS

A weight-centred focus can be damaging the well-being of our clients

### 44 WHY AM I NOT ALWAYS MOTIVATED?

Limiting beliefs could be holding you back from your goal

### 46 2 PROVEN STRATEGIES FOR FALL PREVENTION

Learning to prevent a fall needs to include conditioning of structures and systems head to toe

### 48 DEUX STRATÉGIES ÉPROUVÉES POUR ÉVITER LES CHUTES

Apprendre à prévenir les chutes doit inclure le conditionnement des structures et des systèmes de la tête aux pieds.

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Photo Credit: Dawn Bowman



September-October, 2019

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## Make Your Move

Our purpose at canfitpro is to “Inspire healthy living through fitness education” and there is no better way to breathe life into your career than to attend a live event with cutting edge education and presenters that will move you out of your comfort zone and empower you to pursue your dreams.

No doubt that for those of you who attended canfitpro 2019 you were catapulted forward in your career, having been inspired by what took place this year in Toronto. With over 11,000 fitness professionals and enthusiasts under one roof it would be difficult to feel anything less than inspired. The reality is that nothing can beat attending a live event, where you have face-to-face, heart-to-heart and sweat-to-sweat interactions with industry leaders and peers. It's now your move, to go forward with the new knowledge, energy, confidence and mindset that you have gained and become what you seek!

With Toronto just behind us, we are looking forward to the upcoming regional events in Edmonton on November 2-3, and Vancouver on November 22-24. We encourage you to get out there and be seen, heard and supported both by your peers and the presenters you meet and attend sessions with. Together we can help create new opportunities to blaze new trails, raise the bar and lift each other up. These new and inspiring moments simply cannot happen by sitting behind your computer screen. canfitpro is also excited to re-launch the new revised Fitness Instructor Specialist (FIS) certification course over the next couple of months.

This year's award winners can be inspiring role models for you; they are leading the way and showing us how success is possible. Their power to inspire and impact others is limited only by their belief in themselves and they are committed to excellence and dedicated to continuing education. They have chosen to lead themselves and their communities, training and mentoring people along their path. It is a matter of waking up every day and serving the world with passion and purpose. Get to know who these incredible and deserving presenters and fitness professionals are on pages 10 and 18.

**Maureen “Mo” Hagan**  
Chief Operating Officer

### Fitness Advisory Panel

#### CANADA

Nathalie Lacombe  
Dr. Gillian Mandich  
Dione Mason  
Nathalie Plamondon-Thomas  
Tracie Smith-Beyak  
Scott Wildeman

#### INTERNATIONAL

Kristen Green  
Dan McDonogh  
Sgt. Ken Weichert

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Paul Check

**STEVE BLOCK VENDOR AWARD**



Photo Credit: Dawn Bowman

**PRO TRAINER AWARD RECIPIENTS**

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <b>Nicky Coyne</b><br>Female PRO TRAINER of the Year    | <b>Anthony Mammoliti</b><br>Rookie of the Year | <b>Ante O'Connor</b><br>Astonishing Associate |
| <b>Jeffery Driscoll</b><br>Male PRO TRAINER of the Year | <b>Daniel Smith</b><br>Best in Business        | <b>Trevor Pickett</b><br>Participants' Choice |



L-R: Jake Rondot - Human Kinetics Managing Director of Canada, Barb Pontes - canfitpro Certification Manager, Mo Hagan - canfitpro Chief Operating Officer, Nicky Coyne, Anthony Mammoliti, Jeffery Driscoll, Daniel Smith, Adam Jongsma (accepting for Ante O'Connor), Kyle Tomlin - canfitpro VP, David Patchell-Evans - canfitpro President

*Delegates' Choice Awards*

canfitpro would like to thank all the presenters who bring their very best every time they come to present at a canfitpro conference - whether in Toronto or at one of our regional events across Canada. Each year canfitpro recognizes presenters with the 'Delegates' Choice Award' for Presenter of the Year. Congratulations to this years winners!

**DELEGATES' CHOICE AWARD RECIPIENTS**

- Dione Mason**  
New Presenter
- Kennedy Lodato**  
Canadian Presenter
- Kevin Darby**  
Specialty Presenter
- Sgt. Ken Weichert**  
International Presenter



L-R: Kevin Darby, Kennedy Lodato, Dione Mason, Sgt. Ken Weichert

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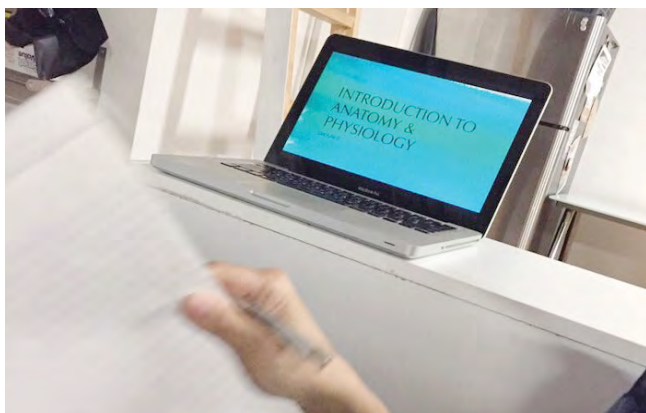
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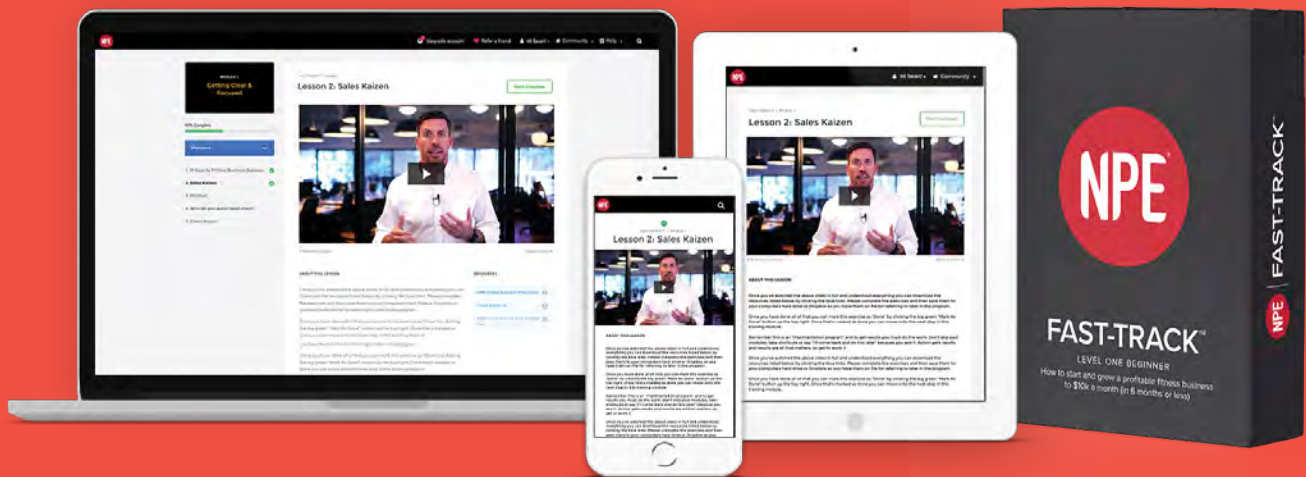
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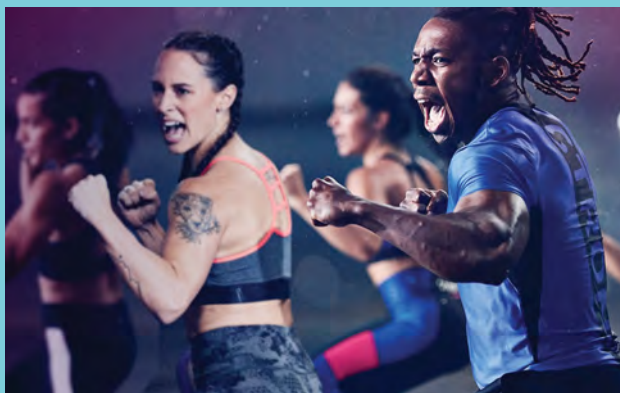
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## THE WARM UP



## PRO TRAINER

# SHOWCASE

**Jeffery Driscoll** Toronto and Pickering, ON  
canfitpro Programs Taught: FIS, CPR & AED

### Why did you become a PRO TRAINER?

I wanted to create more positive change in the lives of others by helping to guide and mold new superstar instructors. I wanted to help instructors become both motivating and effective while bringing the magic and fun of fitness to everyone. I wanted

to make sure no one is left behind in the journey to health and wellness.

### What have you learned as a PRO TRAINER?

There are a variety of different ways of approaching the same goal and end

point. I have had to learn how to adapt, modify and cater to diverse populations of instructors and students. I have learned new approaches to marketing myself and my team, and ways of bridging relationships with others. Most importantly, I have learned that taking time to be selfish once in a while is vital to the growth and wellbeing of the team as a whole, and the students whose lives we impact.

### What's your favourite section of the Fitness Instructor Specialist course and why?

Bioenergetics and anatomy, and physiology reviews. I have also been a huge science geek with degrees in Biology and Biochemistry and in-depth exploration of anatomy through yoga, Thai massage training and self-study. I am so excited to bring this information to people who otherwise would not explore it in a way that is fun and meaningful to them.

### What motivates you to be the best PRO TRAINER you can be?

The first is being there for future participants to ensure their instructors can provide safe and effective workouts. The second is being there for my teammates, other PRO TRAINERS and associates, so that I can help them find success and reach their goals. The third is to create and inspire a world of health, wellness and internal happiness. I truly believe by helping people strive to be the best version of themselves we can make this world a better place.

### In a year from now, what do you hope to achieve?

I would love to have an extensive network of small group training camps and clients throughout Toronto and launch a series of online interactive trainings for clients. Most importantly though, I'd love to see myself creating more dynamic opportunities for students to learn and grow through the creation of unique CEC workshops and a yoga instructor certification.

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# 2019 FITNESS PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR WINNERS!

Meet **Lisa Mastracchio**, Fitness Instructor Specialist of the Year and **Laura Jackson**, Personal Training Specialist of the Year

Photo Credit: Dawn Bowman

**Tell us about your fitness career journey.**

**Laura:** I began my fitness career journey after going through my own personal health transformation in my 20's. I saw the power that taking control of your health through fitness and nutrition not only changed my body, but transformed so many other areas of my life. I was never sporty or athletic growing up and after hitting my early 20's my lifestyle was fueled by long nights, chronic stress and trying to start my career. I almost hit 200 pounds. After starting to focus on my fitness, nutrition and mindset, I not only

lost 50lbs but I also was able to get rid of my chronic anxiety, overcome a long battle with bulimia, and had a positive outlet when things got overwhelming in my life instead of turning to food. I became so passionate about the bigger impact that exercise, nutrition and mindset have on your life as a whole (not just weight loss) that I started teaching and coaching other women part-time. After seeing the amazing changes in my clients physically, mentally and emotionally, I knew that I had found my true calling. I left my corporate job in International Marketing 11 years ago to pursue fitness and nutrition full-time. I have never looked back!

**Lisa:** My fitness career started as a sideline 'hobby'. As a high school English teacher back in the early 90's, I signed up at my local gym as a means to cope with the daily stress of my job. I immediately got hooked on group fitness classes, which were predominantly step aerobics classes back in the day. Soon after, I was approached by my favourite instructor who asked me to think about taking a certification course in order to become a group exercise instructor myself. Of course, it really never crossed my mind, but I did see it as an opportunity for personal growth and so I took the plunge! I soon realized that I had potential and

a passion that would carry me through many years, as my love of teaching fitness classes continued to grow and flourish still to this day, over 25 years later.

### Where will your career path take you?

**Laura:** I believe there is no limit to where you can go in this industry. For me, it has felt like a natural progression - the longer I have worked in this industry, the MORE I want to do and on an even bigger scale. While my passion started with teaching clients in person and building a team who also taught our FIT CHICKS Programs, we are living in a digital world where our clients want to work out in different ways and need programs that are accessible to THEIR schedule. I will continue to grow our FIT CHICKS holistic approach and programs online to be able to reach and help more women that don't have access or time to attend in-person training. I also am extremely passionate about helping other women build successful fitness businesses so they not only can support themselves but be able to impact more



**LISA MASTRACCHIO**

people through teaching health in their communities. I currently mentor over 400 female fitness and health pros. Over the next year my goal is to mentor 1000 female fitness professionals and give them the skills, confidence and tools to do what I have done and in turn, build healthier communities around the world.

**Lisa:** My career path has taken me further than I had ever imagined. From teaching a variety of classes, creating choreography for virtual and pre-choreographed programs, becoming a personal trainer, presenting sessions and workshops for different fitness conferences across the country, training instructors as a Trainer for GoodLife Fitness and an FIS PRO TRAINER, as well as the countless community events and television opportunities that I've had over the years.

Each Fitness Professional winner receives a prize package valued at \$5,000.

### What challenges have you overcome and what did you learn? How has that made you a better professional?

**Laura:** I have faced a lot of challenges or what I prefer to call lessons. Including being a woman in a very male dominated industry when I first started, trying to grow a fitness business without any loans or financial support (just a lot of sweat and hard work!), dealing with self doubt (which I think we can all relate to), trying to take my business online when I am NOT a techy person, and dealing with shifts and changes in the fitness market. It can be very overwhelming, but through these challenges/lessons I have learned the power of surrounding yourself with the right mentors and community who understand what you are going through (thanks canfitpro!) and can support you when you feel like things are falling apart. When you are in this industry, life will throw you all types of curve balls, but there is always a solution or a person who can help you. It has made me a better professional because I can not only share my learnings to help others in this industry, but I truly know I can find a solution to every problem. It has also made me WAY more resourceful!

On the personal side, overcoming an eating disorder, which I battled with for 15 years, and learning how important the mental health aspect is of what we do, was one of the biggest personal challenges I have ever dealt with. This has made me a better professional because I can connect with the women I train on a deeper level and not only help them change their bodies but use fitness and nutrition as an outlet and natural method to help them in recovery. This industry is so much more than six pack abs or getting your 'body' back – I truly believe it is the best form of natural and preventative medicine, and I approach everything from a holistic perspective. I do not think I would feel this strongly had I not had my own personal battle for so long or be the woman and coach I am today.

**Lisa:** There have been many challenges over the years. Striking a work / life 'balancing act' has been challenging over the years. Having children, responsibilities, work demands and maintaining my own personal fitness level have been an on-going challenge throughout the past two decades. However, a challenge I faced a few times over the years was adapting to the changes in my fitness club workplace. The fitness chains I worked for underwent changes either in company banner through new partnerships or location closures. When the gym environment undergoes transitions and changes,

people panic. Negativity, fear of the unknown and general disappointment can breed and as a fitness professional, being exposed to this atmosphere is not easy. But through these events I learned to trust the process and know that the 'dust would settle'. My job was to remain anchored in positivity while working through the storm of criticism and discontent. Being a professional means we understand people's very normal reactions while we remain calm and confident that all will work out in the end... which it all did by the way!

### What is the best piece of advice you have ever received?

**Laura:** One of the best pieces of life advice I have received over the last year is "Whether you think you can or can't, you are right". It is a quote by Henry Ford and was said to me by my fitness business partner and best friend of 26 years, Amanda Quinn.

**Lisa:** The best piece of advice I received



**LAURA JACKSON**

was from Mo Hagan, who encouraged me to always be coachable! That golden nugget has stayed with me for years. When you're open to feedback, you grow. You learn how to be a better version of yourself by leaving your ego and excuses behind. Her mentorship, leadership and friendship have helped shape me through the years.

This valuable piece of advice continues to mold me as I still seek out opportunities to craft my instructor skills. In turn, I've passed this nugget on to other instructors that I've coached and mentored over the years. It's really one of the best things you can be as a fitness professional. Stay humble, be coachable and keep growing!

### Now that you have reached this point in your career, what piece of advice would you give your younger self?

**Laura:** I would tell my younger self not to ever underestimate the power you

have to transform other people's lives (physically, mentally and emotionally) and the impact you can make in this world. Your purpose here is to help other women to be their best and healthiest selves, so start building the programs and classes you know in your heart can do that and don't let self doubt stand in your way. There are so many people out there who want you to succeed and an amazing community of health pro's who will connect with you so start reaching out to them and let them help you grow into the person you are meant to be.

**Lisa:** Advice I'd give my younger self would be "don't compare yourself to another instructor". In my early days, I fell into that trap far too much. I'd feel 'less than' and lack confidence as a result. Of course, with very little experience, it's too easy to look at a seasoned instructor with envy. She/he may have a massive class following, awesome choreography, a great connection with people, fine-tuned musicality and mastered technical skills! But we can't compare our uniqueness to that of another's. Stay in your lane, be patient, do good work and share it... trust the process and yes, in time, you will build your tribe!

#### **If you were to write a motto for yourself, what would it be?**

**Laura:** Live everyday with commitment, courage, compassion and connection.

**Lisa:** Work hard, stay humble, be YOU!

#### **Why did you decide to nominate yourself for the Fitness Professional of the Year Award?**

**Laura:** I nominated myself again for this award because I love this industry and everything it does to better the lives of not only women but the world in general. I consider it an honor to wake up everyday and get to work helping other people live their best lives. I also have been a leader in female fitness, nutrition, wellness and business for over 11 years. Not only have I transformed my client's bodies and health but I have helped mentor hundreds of women who are getting into this industry to succeed in it - both online and in-person. And this is just the beginning for the movement I want to be a part of. I live, breathe, eat and sleep this industry and I continually strive to make the world healthier and this industry better. Health has a ripple effect that starts with you. I think I am the best example for other women who want to grow their careers in this industry, what you can achieve and become if you have the passion and the drive to do it, and the impact you can have on your community.

**Lisa:** I applied for FPOY because I feel that this past year, in particular, was special with so many different opportunities that I seized in order to reach others through fitness. Through different platforms and places, I was able to share the passion I have for people with my ultimate message that we ALL have potential to be the best versions of ourselves, in body, mind and spirit!

Also, I wanted to commemorate my

passion and purpose in fitness as I'll soon be celebrating a milestone in my life... my fifties!

#### **How do you know when you're 'done' and ready for the next challenge?**

**Laura:** This is one of those questions that is hard to answer! Sometimes in life and business things run their course and you can feel they are 'done'. Other times, you are the one who needs to make that decision (and it may be an easy one or a tough one). For me, it is a combination of listening to my gut, looking at what is best for my clients and my team, and reaching out to my mentors. I always trust my gut first and if something doesn't feel right I don't do it, or I decide to let it go. But there are times that it is just fear masking itself so that is when it is so beneficial to have a mentor, partner or coach in the industry to talk through it with. We forget that we do not have to be alone and we can fly so much higher if we let others be in our corner.

**Lisa:** Every December, I assess, reflect and evaluate what I've done in the past year and where I want to go in the next 12 months. I set my goals for the New Year and write them down. For example, what conferences I'd like to attend to earn my CECs, which certifications I'd like to add to my repertoire and where I'd like to focus my energy to continue to grow my career in this ever-changing industry. I believe as fitness professionals we need to constantly evolve and adapt to our industry if we want longevity and to continue to flourish, thrive and fuel our fitness flame.

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*Murray MacKenzie, C.I.P., B.Comm., is Senior Vice President of Commercial Insurance at Gallagher. Murray has been working*

*in the insurance industry for over 30 years. He is a graduate of McMaster University. Contact him at [murray\\_mackenzie@ajg.com](mailto:murray_mackenzie@ajg.com) or visit [ajgcanada.com/canfitpro](http://ajgcanada.com/canfitpro).*

**BUSINESS**

# OWNER INTENT: HOW DO YOU MEASURE SUCCESS?



**BE A MORE EFFECTIVE  
LEADER OF YOURSELF  
AND OTHERS BY  
DEFINING YOUR OWNER  
INTENT**

*By Sean Greeley, NPE Founder & CEO*

## **TO CONTINUE TO GROW THIS RELATIONSHIP, WHETHER YOU'RE A NEW START-UP OR AN EXPERIENCED BUSINESS OWNER, SOONER OR LATER YOU'RE GOING TO FEEL DISORIENTED AS YOU OPERATE YOUR BUSINESS.**

There are SO many things you COULD be doing or working on, and SO many ways you can get stuck working on those things, that it's normal to feel lost. And it's mission critical to find a way to guide you out of the fog.

There are lots of things that can help you correct your course: Your values, purpose, mission, financial statements, and any of the endless metrics or key performance indicators that are appropriate given your goals and business size. But in front of ALL of that is your Owner Intent. This is your "North Star" in OWNING a business.

Your Owner Intent/North Star is necessary because your role as a business OWNER is very different from the role you (may or may not) play as a business OPERATOR. And yes, you're an operator if you're involved in leading growth and the day-to-day operations of your company.

**Operations can (and often will) make you tired (physically, emotionally and mentally).**

**Ownership has the power to make you rich (income, impact, freedom and more).**

Your business's operations should support your ownership intentions, not merely the operational work you have to do. Understanding the difference between operations and ownership is a simple yet VERY powerful distinction that matters. And matters a LOT!

### **Defining What Success Looks Like**

Once you understand this distinction, dive in and start defining your Owner Intent. This is simply a written statement that defines what success looks like for you in owning THIS business NOW (with THIS business and NOW also being important distinctions). And, it includes how you will measure success.

To get clear on your Owner Intent and Success Measurements, answer questions like:

- What do you want your business to do for you?
- How does owning your business serve you?
- What desires/goals will it allow you to fulfill/achieve?
- What personal income goals (if any) do you want your business to support? By when?
- What are your rules of engagement as the owner of your business?
- What type of impact do you want your business to make with its clients/customers? The industry?

Keep in mind there are no right or wrong answers to these questions. The goal is that you have simply given thought to each and gotten clear on your Owner Intent. That will, in turn, allow you to be a more effective (and capable) leader of yourself and others on the road ahead.

## **"WE LIVE IN A DYNAMIC WORLD AND YOUR OWNER INTENT STATEMENT NEEDS TO EVOLVE WITH YOU."**

Here are three real-life examples:

### **Example #1: 'Be your own boss, Kaitlyn'**

Kaitlyn is currently employed as a personal trainer for a local studio. She wants to start her own business because she desires more autonomy and wants to increase her income. After looking at what success looks like to her, and identifying her vision, values, and goals, Kaitlyn defined her Owner Intent as: 1) having full control of her future, and 2) increasing personal income.

Next, she got specific about how she would measure success of achieving her Owner Intent. To Kaitlyn, having full control of her future means the ability to set her own rates, run her own billing, control her cost structure, and train clients the way she wants to program and deliver services. Increasing personal income means going from \$3,000 to \$6,000 per month.

### **Example #2: 'Get transformed, Mike'**

Mike was overweight growing up, lost 40 pounds, and now loves how he looks and feels. He works a corporate job that pays well, but he's not passionate about his job.

## **"UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN OPERATIONS AND OWNERSHIP IS A SIMPLE YET VERY POWERFUL DISTINCTION THAT MATTERS."**

He wants to start a business doing work he cares about, helping others achieve their fitness goals.

Mike defined "What does success look like to me?" as: 1) living life healthy and fit, 2) earning a professional income that meets his needs, and 3) making an impact in the lives of others through doing meaningful work.

A success measurement for "living life healthy and fit" means having time for fitness each day. "Earning a professional income that meets his needs" means taking home \$5,000/month in personal income. And "making an impact in the lives of others through doing meaningful work" means leading 12+ clients to achieve amazing body transformation results each year (as evidenced by powerful before/after photos).

### **Example #3: 'Freedom lifestyle, Rodge'**

Rodger is an existing studio owner. His business grew well initially, but now because of increased competition and trainer injuries (that have led to staff transitions), his business has lost clients. Rodger's personal income has dropped and now he's back training classes 15 hours per week.

Rodger defined his Owner Intent as: 1) increasing personal income, and 2) having more time and freedom. His success measurement for "increasing personal income" means increasing his distributions to take home \$3,250 every other week. "Having more time and freedom" means teaching ZERO group training sessions (so he has more freedom to work from home or step away on holiday with his family and not have to worry about the business falling over).

### **Where Business Owners Get Stuck**

In theory, this sounds like a simple exercise. But there are lots of places business owners get tripped up.

**First, they simply don't get clear on their intent.** They operate from a collection of vague answers, which often revolve around nebulous 'feelings' that can move or sway depending on whichever way the wind blows today. Don't let that happen to you. Invest the time to get clear answers. Have hard measures of success to know whether you're ON or OFF course with YOUR intent.

Second, they put too much pressure on their business to do too much, too soon. Know that ALL your goals in life don't have to be fulfilled by owning just one business... today. You just need good answers to two simple questions 1) WHY this business and 2) WHAT do you want from ownership (looking at your life and the world around you) right NOW?

Third, they don't evolve their Owner Intent statement when needed. We live in a dynamic world and your Owner Intent

statement needs to evolve with you. You're always changing and so is the market (and environment) in which your business operates.

**Summary**

It's easy to get lost as a business owner. Things get complicated and feel overwhelming, especially if you're involved in day-to-day operations. Your written statement of your intent with owning your business is what keeps you on track.

Take the time to answer the questions above. You'll get clarity, energy and power when you define your Owner Intent statement because you'll be leading yourself and others to the outcomes that matter most.

Finally, remember as your life evolves and business grows... it's important to review and update your Owner Intent statement.

When you're feeling lost, look up and keep your "North Star" in front of you to guide you on your way and ensure you get rich in your "return on investment" in the ways that matter most to you.



*Sean Greeley, CEO and Founder of NPE, has an unrelenting passion for empowering fitness business owners to grow their business and create the life they want. Since 2006, NPE has served 45,000+ fitness business owners in 96+ countries and is an award-winning company with offices in Los Angeles, London, and Sydney. [npefitness.com](http://npefitness.com)*

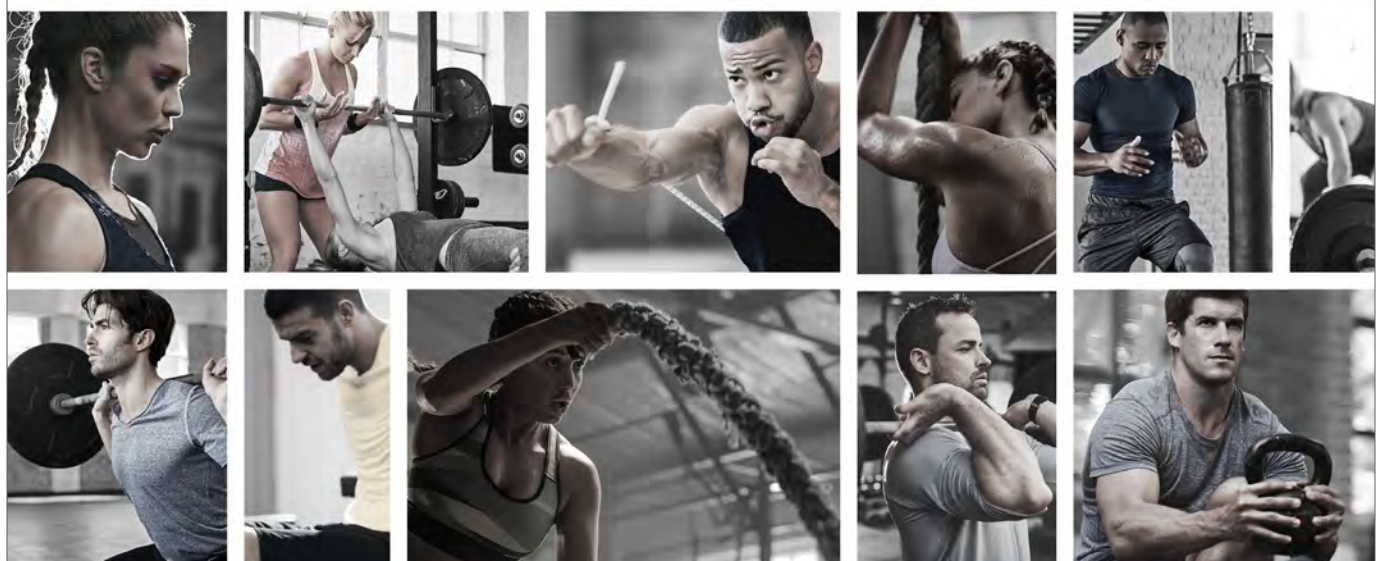


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# LESSONS LEARNED

**PRACTICAL TIPS TO BUILDING AND  
MAINTAINING YOUR FITNESS CAREER**

*By Kathleen Trotter, FIS, PTS*

## I RECENTLY CHECKED MY CANFITPRO MEMBERSHIP CARD AND REALIZED THAT I HAVE OFFICIALLY SPENT OVER HALF MY LIFE IN THE FITNESS FIELD

— a totally surreal milestone considering I spent the first half dreaming of being a lawyer, sneaking unhealthy food, and lying to get out of gym class. I was, to put it mildly, overweight and unhealthy. What a difference half a lifetime can make. I am now a trainer with a Master's in Exercise Science, a Holistic Nutritionist, a Life Coach, and a fitness enthusiast.

Believe me, my evolution was not instantaneous. Building my career took perseverance, a growth mindset, patience, realistic expectations, and practice. The initial “domino” was my Mom forcing me to join the YMCA. Participating in aerobics led to teaching, which led to becoming a personal trainer.

As a newbie, I dreamed of owning a studio and being a health writer. Excellent goals, but thankfully, at some base level, I understood that careers develop over time. I was in grade one of my fitness career and it would be self-sabotage to expect to “ace grade 12” before I had mastered grades one through 11. I would have quit if I had expected to achieve my goals overnight, or even in two or three years.

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**“ONE BECOMES A BETTER, MORE KNOWLEDGEABLE HEALTH PRACTITIONER ONE COURSE, ONE DAY, ONE CLIENT AT A TIME ...”**

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Mastering anything takes “bum in the seat time.” Sure, when I started I was certified and competent, but I wasn't excellent. I progressed toward my goals and gained confidence and skill through practice. This probably sounds obvious, but it is amazing how easy it is to have unrealistic expectations and get caught up unproductively comparing our experiences to a colleague at a completely different “grade” in their career.

Your goals will, obviously, be different than mine. There are many career paths — all have pros and cons. Train in a gym? They

take a monetary cut but provide the facility and possible clients. Train clients at home? Keep the money, but travel eats at your profits.

One becomes a better, more knowledgeable health practitioner one course, one day, one client at a time, and there is a price of admission for every path — a trade-off to every decision. Take the path with the pros that work for you and the cons that you can handle.

A few other lessons learned along the way:

### A) Interacting with the Client

You might be the fitness expert, but every client is the expert on “them”.

*Be curious. Listen.*

We are not an expert on anyone's life except our own. Never presume to understand your client's life, or goals, better than they do. You might want a six-pack. Your client might dream of improved mobility. Help them achieve their version of fit, not yours.

*Create individualized programs.*

Build a plan to fit your client's weak links, exercise history, goals, and lifestyle realities verses trying to fit a person into a pre-existing plan.

### B) Personal Growth

*Set boundaries.*

You can't be of any service to anyone, including yourself, if you're dead, burned out, exhausted, etc. Set boundaries. Be available and open to opportunities, but never sacrifice your health. Yes, easier said than done. I used to sleep at the gym to maximize working hours. I had to learn better (although my partner, James, would half-jokingly say, since I now have a studio in my home, I just brought the gym to where I sleep.) All jokes aside, take baby steps. Initially, I took Sundays off. Currently, I take Wednesdays, Sundays, and start late Tuesdays and Thursdays. As your career evolves, so should your boundaries.

*Pinpoint what gives you joy.*

No client wants to work with a bored, unengaged, “going through the motions” trainer. Feeling unmotivated? Do something that brings you joy. Take a course, travel, or have some fun — “light yourself up.”

*Cultivate a growth mindset.*

A “growth-mindset” is the ability to non-judgmentally learn from every

experience, to lean in to knowing that when you don't know something or have not mastered something, you just don't know it or haven't mastered it yet. For example, don't have a full client roster? Analyze the situation, pinpoint opportunities and maybe take a PR course, then implement your plan.

Conveniently, a growth-oriented mindset will help your personal development and aid client retention. Clients are more likely to stay engaged in their health process, and thus reach their goals, when they can navigate the inherent undulations. If your client can't do something (i.e., push-ups, eliminate late-night eating), no problem. Help them analyze the situation. Then create a plan of attack.

Teach yourself and your clients to use “not knowing” and/or “failing” as opportunities to learn and become stronger. For more information, check out Carol Dweck's work.

### C) Networking, staying current, and scope of practice

As my osteopath, John D'Aguianno, says, “be the hub” — create a referral network. This “hub” serves multiple purposes: it allows you to respect scope of practice and support your clients, and once you develop relationships, referrals will flow in both directions.

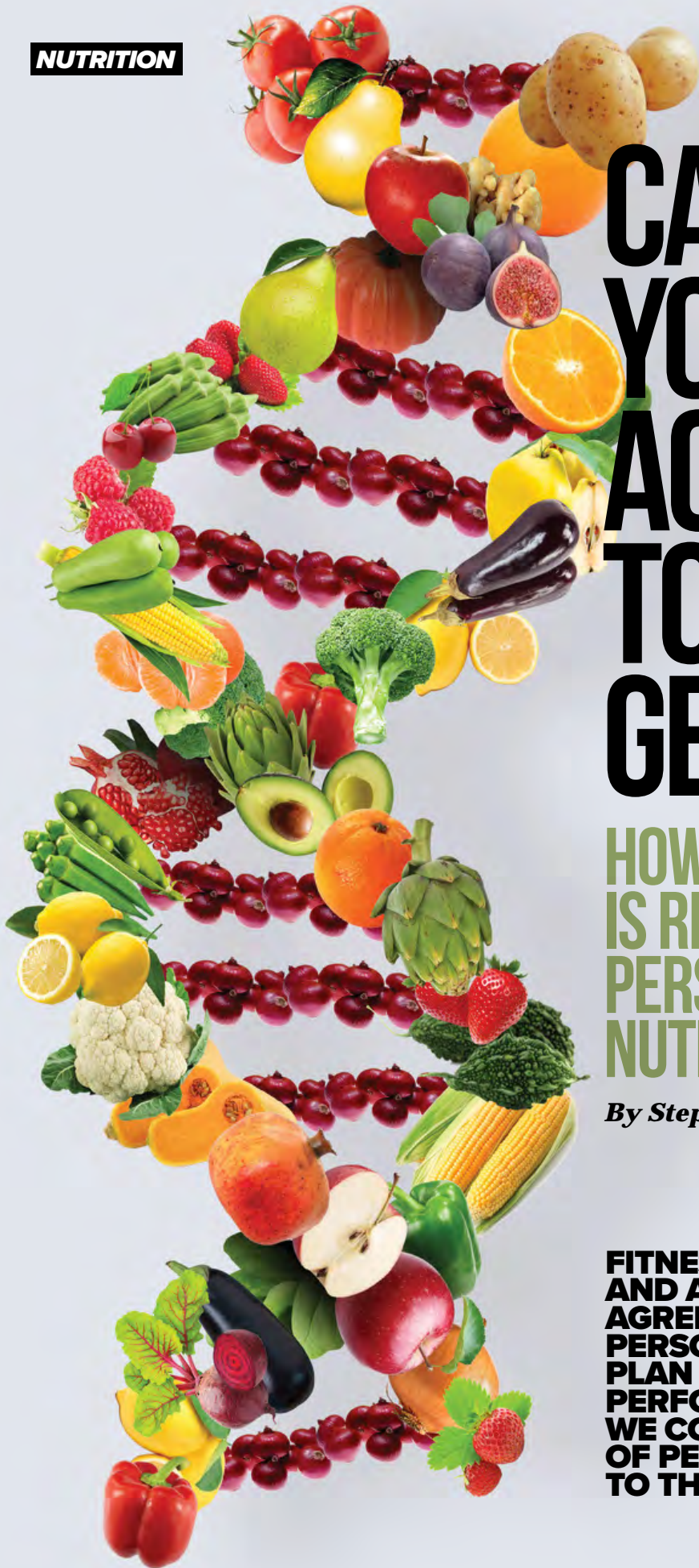
Cultivate like-minded colleagues. Attend courses. Read about and/or try different workouts, classes, practitioners, etc, so your advice stems from knowledge. Be the client. Working with two outstanding trainers early in my career, Travis Anderson and Kristen Bustamante, allowed me to experience the type of trainer I wanted to be.

To paraphrase Maya Angelou, people don't remember what you say; they remember how you make them feel. Strive to make each client feel seen, heard, inspired, and motivated.



*Kathleen Trotter holds a masters degree in Exercise Science, is the author of two books including the new book **Your Fittest Future Self**, and is a*

*Personal trainer, Nutritionist, Pilates Specialist and Life Coach.*  
[KathleenTrotter.com](http://KathleenTrotter.com)



# CAN YOU EAT ACCORDING TO YOUR GENES?

HOW NUTRIGENOMICS IS REVOLUTIONIZING PERSONALIZED NUTRITION

*By Stephanie Hnatiuk RD, CDE, PTS*

**FITNESS PROFESSIONALS AND ATHLETES WILL ALL AGREE THAT A HIGH-QUALITY, PERSONALIZED NUTRITION PLAN IS KEY FOR OPTIMIZING PERFORMANCE, BUT WHAT IF WE COULD TAKE THE CONCEPT OF PERSONALIZED NUTRITION TO THE NEXT LEVEL?**

Now we can, by discovering our unique genetic markers which can provide important insights into how our body processes the foods and nutrients we eat. Nutrigenomics (the study of the interactions between nutrition and our genetics) is both an exciting and emerging area of nutrition science. Over the past decade, nutrigenomics research has contributed to the advancement of nutritional strategies that can be truly customized to an individual's unique DNA. Scientists in the field have discovered genetic differences between people that affect how our bodies digest, absorb and metabolize different nutrients, as well as how we physiologically and psychologically respond to diet and exercise. Even a person's motivation to participate in physical activity can be partially explained by genetics.

While there are many genes under investigation for their various implications on our health, a few stand out as being particularly important for athletic performance, for both elite and recreational pursuits.

### **Caffeine Metabolizing Genes**

Caffeine is the world's most commonly used drug, and decades of research has been dedicated to investigating caffeine as a performance enhancer in sport. However, with the advancement of DNA sequencing technology in recent years, nutrigenomics research has demonstrated that people who have different caffeine metabolizing genotypes (versions of the gene) can have varying responses to caffeine ingestion. Some people metabolize caffeine faster than others, due to sequence differences in the CYP1A2 gene in the liver. These fast caffeine metabolizers experience the performance-enhancing effects of caffeine to a higher degree than their slow-metabolizing counterparts. A randomized controlled trial demonstrated that among individuals with the slow caffeine metabolizing genotype, caffeine consumption prior to physical activity negatively impacted athletic performance. Those with the "slow metabolizer" genotype are also at higher risk of other health consequences from even moderate caffeine consumption (over 200mg per day), including high blood pressure, pre-diabetes and risk of heart attack. So, determining whether your client is a fast or slow caffeine metabolizer based on the CYP1A2 gene can help you determine if a cup of coffee before their training session can enhance their performance, or if they might be better off without it.

### **Vitamins and Minerals**

Athletic performance, exercise recovery,

## **"... NUTRIGENOMICS RESEARCH HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF NUTRITIONAL STRATEGIES THAT CAN BE TRULY CUSTOMIZED TO AN INDIVIDUAL'S UNIQUE DNA."**

training response and risk of injuries can all be impacted by suboptimal nutritional status. Nutrigenomics research on vitamins and minerals have revealed a number of genetic variations in nutrient-dependent pathways which affect the absorption, utilization and metabolism of those nutrients. People with certain genotypes that can impact their body's ability to efficiently absorb or utilize certain vitamins and minerals can have their training, recovery, and performance affected if they are not getting adequate amounts from their diet. Iron, calcium, vitamin B12, vitamin A, vitamin D, folate, and vitamin C have all been identified as key nutrients for optimizing training and performance, which are also impacted by our unique genetic code. More recently, genes related to antioxidant status and choline metabolism in the body have been shown to affect muscle damage and the speed of muscle repair and recovery in certain individuals who are not consuming enough of these essential nutrients. Having too much of a nutrient can also be detrimental to health, body composition or performance. So, information in our DNA can help us determine our "optimal zone" for dietary intakes.

### **Body Composition**

Genetics can help explain why different dietary strategies work best for different people when it comes to increasing muscle mass or losing body fat. Variations in the genes that regulate body composition in response to dietary protein and different types of dietary fats have been shown to have an impact on weight loss, body mass index, and waist circumference.

### **Training Response**

It's no secret that some people seem to have a natural talent when it comes to athletic performance. While putting the hard work into a training program is still critical for success, some athletes do have genetic advantages that give

them an enhanced response to training. This means that with the same amount of strength or endurance training, these people are likely to see more benefits than their non-responder peers. Now, for those who do not possess these genes all hope isn't lost! What it means is that you may need to adapt how much or what type of training you do to work with your genetics for optimal performance.

So, how can you find out a client's genetic information?

A simple saliva test is all it takes! There are Registered Dietitians across Canada who specialize in nutrigenomic-focused nutrition and offer testing through their practices. There are also several companies who offer similar services via direct-to-consumer tests.

A few tips on choosing a genetic test:

1. Choose a brand of test that was developed by experts and researchers in the field of nutrigenomics. Ensure the company has a reputable scientific advisory board so you know the tests are high-quality and scientifically sound. Be critical of claims that sound too good to be true.
2. Pick a brand of test that includes only the relevant genes you need (such as nutrition-specific genes or ones pertinent to athletic performance, rather than ones that provide risk of disease and other physical/health traits). More genes may sound like a good idea, but it can be information overload for clients, as well as for providers trying to give lifestyle advice based on the test results.
3. Choose a reputable brand of genetic tests that have sample reports available so you can ensure your client knows exactly what type of information they can expect to receive.



**Stephanie Hnatiuk is a Winnipeg-based Registered Dietitian, Diabetes Educator, and personal trainer who specializes in nutrigenomics and performance**

*nutrition. With 10 years of experience in the health and fitness industry, Stephanie believes a personalized approach to nutrition that incorporates a person's unique genetic code can optimize performance in athletes of any level.*  
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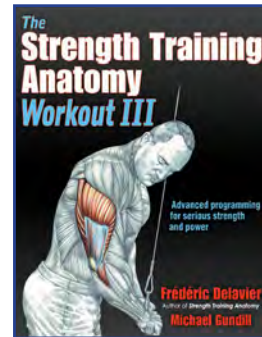
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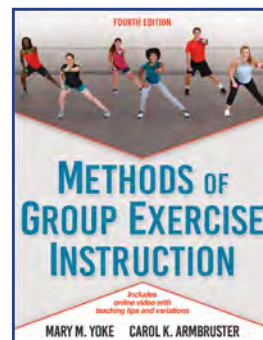


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# TANDOORI MASALA STUFFED EGGPLANT

By Mandy Gill



Are you looking for a recipe that's satisfying, saucy, healthy and hearty to open your eyes to the world of plant based eating? Then this is the one!

In just one hour, you can have this meal prepped and ready to enjoy for a fun dinner with family and friends, leaving them in awe of the flavours and concept that it's full of protein and fibre, without the use of any animal products. Let's get cookin'!

Prep Time: 15 Minutes  
 Cook Time: 45 Minutes  
 Total Time: 1 Hour  
 \*Gluten Free/Plant Based (Vegan)

**Eggplant:**

- 4 small eggplants
- 2 tbsp coconut oil (sub water if avoiding oil)
- 1 pinch sea salt

**Chickpeas:**

- 2 cups chickpeas
- 1 1/2 cups crushed tomatoes (if you can find crushed all the better, they're best for flavour and texture. If not use diced or pureed)
- Tandoori Masala Spice Blend (at Whole Foods and local spice markets)
- Sea salt and black pepper to taste

**Topping:**

- 1 1/2 Tbsp vegan parmesan cheese (I used Earth Island parmesan)

**Serving:**

- Fresh chopped cilantro or parsley
- Cauliflower rice with sautéed kale
- Mixed Vegetables: I got creative with brussel sprouts, mushrooms, the remaining parts of the eggplant from hollowing them, white onion, coconut oil, salt and pepper to taste

**Instructions:**

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit and get out a 9x13-inch baking dish.
2. To a large saucepan add chickpeas, crushed tomatoes, tandoori masala spice blend, salt and pepper. Heat over medium heat until bubbling, then reduce heat to simmer and cook for 5 minutes more. Taste and adjust flavor, adding more tandoori masala spice blend, salt, and/or pepper.
3. Carefully use a knife to cut an angled divot out of the center of your eggplants. Use a spoon to scrape out a hollow center. Make sure to leave enough eggplant flesh so it's sturdy enough to hold the chickpeas. (I saved my leftover eggplant to add into mixed vegetables).
4. Heat a large rimmed skillet over medium heat. Add coconut oil and the eggplant cut-side down and cover. You're looking for the eggplant to be softened and browned on the outside, so I best recommend cooking the eggplant on one side for 4-5 minutes or until slightly charred. Then flip the eggplant over on the other side, cover, and cook for 4-5 minutes more.

5. Once the eggplant is cooked, place cut-side up in your baking dish and top with chickpeas. There should be plenty to fill the eggplant and some overflow, which can be spooned down into the dish. Top with vegan parmesan cheese.
6. Bake uncovered for 30-35 minutes or until the eggplant is soft and browned and the chickpeas are bubbling.
7. The fantastic part about this dish is it can go with so many options for sides. I served mine with cauliflower rice and sautéed kale, mixed vegetables (brussel sprouts, mushrooms, the remaining parts of the eggplant from hollowing them, white onion, coconut oil, salt and pepper to taste).

Have fun, get inspired and enjoy as a 'Meatless Monday' option to wow your taste buds and increase your overall energy, thanks to quality ingredients!



*Mandy Gill is the founder of the international brand MGM Fitness; the MANDY GILL APP for personalized fitness, nutrition guidance, and mindfulness at your fingertips. She is a plant based Ultra Marathon Trail Race Runner, and has been honoured as a "YWCA Women of Distinction in 2017 and 2018". Visit [MandyGill.com](http://MandyGill.com) or @MGMSFit\_Mandy to learn more about her passion as a Health & Happiness advocate.*

# FITNESS GAMES FOR KIDS

**RELAYS ARE A FUN AND EFFECTIVE WAY TO HELP KIDS PARTICIPATE IN INTERVAL TRAINING**

*By Mike Bracko, Ed.D., CSCS, CHSC-3, FACSM*

**KIDS LOVE TO RUN, JUMP, MOVE, AND COMPETE IN RELAYS. RELAY RACES WITH EXERCISES CAN BE GREAT FOR A WORKOUT AND TEACH EXERCISE AND LOCOMOTOR SKILLS.**

Kids do not like continuous exercise and are not physically prepared for it. Conversely, interval training is well tolerated and more fun. Interval training for kids is not the traditional high intensity interval training we think of rather; it means intervals of medium intensity games and relays with rest.

#### **Youth Interval Training**

Birat, et al. (2018) indicate kids get more fatigued during endurance training because they have limited cardiovascular capability, they do not move efficiently, and they take more steps and exert more energy to run a given distance. However, kids overcome poor endurance with fatigue-resistant muscles and quick recovery from high-intensity exercise.

A bonus of interval training for kids is that most sports are anaerobic in nature or have a “fast-slow” component. When training young athletes, we can focus on high intensity, short duration relays. An example of a fitness relay is four to five lines of four to five kids in each line. After the fitness pro demonstrates the drill, the athlete at the front of each line sprints 20 – 25 meters, performs an exercise for 10 – 20 repetitions, and sprints back to the start/finish line. Each person high-fives the next person in line who performs the drill.

#### **Developing Motor Skills, Proprioception, and Foundation Exercises**

Before youth athletes move to higher levels of training, they must develop basic movement skills and proper static and dynamic postural mechanics. Young athletes need to learn proper technique for “foundation” exercises such as squats, push-ups and front planks before moving to higher levels of training.

An example of fitness games that develop foundation exercises can be the following: the fitness pro demonstrates each exercise with teaching cues directed at the three most important body positions/movements. The kids practice five to 10 repetitions of each exercise. After the fitness pro is satisfied the kids have good form and technique, the relay races are set up with four to five lines with four to five kids in each line (or how ever many kids there are and considering the space available). The relay race course is marked with cones, so that the kids run 20 – 25 meters, perform





five to 10 repetitions of a squat, run back where they high-five the next person in line and this continues until the race is done. The next races have the kids perform push-ups and front planks.

Relay races can be used to develop static stability with balance positions on one and two feet, with arms still and moving. The balance positions can be on the floor or on unstable equipment such as a BOSU balance trainer. Next, develop dynamic balance with combinations of jumping, hopping, bounding and other locomotor movements. Because success in most sports is based on the ability to move in multiple directions, young athletes must learn various locomotion movements. In addition, young athletes need to learn acceleration/deceleration, speed, reactivity, agility, and body awareness.

#### **More Ideas for Fitness Games**

The relay races are important for kids to focus on the activity. They must pay

attention as they move in line to get ready for their turn to do the drill. We do not want the kids to be standing in line for too long. Waiting in line gives the athletes a chance to rest, but if the line is too long, they can get distracted. To get as many athletes moving as possible, it is important to make the race teams as small as possible.

Safety is an important consideration. All slipping and tripping hazards must be cleared from the area, all backpacks put away, no water bottles allowed in the game area, and the kids must be instructed they cannot dive or slide to finish the race rather, they must stay on their feet.

In addition to the locomotor skills mentioned above, hopping, galloping, skipping, side-stepping, and carioca can be used for relays. Movements such as vertical and horizontal jumping and landing, two and one foot hopping, and side-to-side hopping are good to use. Equipment such as BOSU balance trainers, stability

balls, bounce balls, med balls, mini-hurdles, and steps can be implemented at the beginning, middle, or the turn-around of the race. With body weight exercises and equipment, the possibilities for relays are endless.



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# WORKING PREGNANT AND MAKING A COME BACK!

**10 TIPS TO HELP PREGNANT FITNESS PROS  
BALANCE THEIR CAREERS AND MOTHERHOOD**

*By MJ Shaw, FIS, PTS*

# BECOMING A MOTHER IS AN INCREDIBLE GIFT. THIS GIFT NEED NOT COME AT THE EXPENSE OF YOUR FITNESS CAREER.

As fitness professionals, we know the benefits of staying fit and active throughout pregnancy. However, the optics of a fitness professional working while pregnant can have mixed reactions. It is in our power to educate and shift perceptions, allowing women to have equal opportunities in the fitness industry.

Despite my high-risk IVF pregnancy at 40-years old, I was able to train and instruct classes until I was 37 weeks pregnant. I delivered a healthy 10-pound baby boy a week later. On the whole, I felt confident, capable and like a Prego Super Star leading fitness classes with my babe in tow!

Working as a fitness professional throughout my pregnancy not only kept my career on track, but helped my mental, physical and emotional health, as well as my pregnancy recovery. Even after an emergency C-section, I was back to work part-time eight weeks after delivery, and full-time 12 weeks post-partum. I adjusted my work schedule so that I could breastfeed and pump between classes and clients, giving me a balance between enjoying my son and my job.

While certain pregnancies have complications and medical requirements that should absolutely be taken into consideration, fitness professionals can continue to work safely and healthily well into their pregnancy and make a safe and happy return in good time, without jeopardizing their careers or their motherhood.

## 10 Tips for Pregnant Fitness Pros

**Treat yourself as you would a healthy and fit prenatal client:** You know the possibilities and limitations of prenatal fitness; apply these to your own training and work activities. Listen to your well-tuned body awareness and use your best judgment. Instead of hot yoga, go for a hatha class. Instead of a HIIT workout, go for muscle resistance training. But keep working out! It will do your body and your baby's good.

### Be ready for perceptions to change:

There are some misconceptions that can create barriers for pregnant women leading fitness. Certain clients will find it hard to be instructed by a woman with a large belly whom they perceive as 'weaker' or 'at-risk', while others will find it an inspirational marvel! You can never anticipate who will feel what, but being prepared for this shift will help moderate potential disappointment.

**Lead by example:** One of the best ways to change perceptions and encourage other women to keep working out throughout pregnancy is to see a pro doing it. Observing your beloved instructor staying strong, fit and carrying on with her life and career is the best way to shift views and inspire others to do the same.

**Use your words:** While you may not be able to actually do the Tabatas with your clients, you can verbally cue them like a champ! General rule: more coaching, less participating. This is a great opportunity to tune the way you encourage and lead, even for a short time.

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**“...THE OPTICS OF A FITNESS PROFESSIONAL WORKING WHILE PREGNANT CAN HAVE MIXED REACTIONS.”**

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**Have your subs ready to roll:** Give your trusted subs a heads up that you are pregnant and may need added support for unmanageable morning sickness, medical appointments or unforeseeable complications. Plan your class subs or replacement trainers well in advance of your mat leave. This way your clients will be informed and you won't be scrambling.

**Be kind to yourself:** Working while pregnant is especially challenging when your job is as physically demanding as ours. You are growing a human, which is a lot of work, so give yourself a pat on the back and treat yourself to added moments of rest and relaxation. Also, remind yourself how beautiful your growing body is!

**Have an exit plan:** Based on your due date, give yourself a realistic mat leave 'start date'. I would advise by 36 or 37 weeks pregnant, as your baby could arrive any time by then. Can you imagine going into labour after a full day of classes and clients? Not ideal. Give yourself that two to four weeks nesting

and resting time. You'll need it once your bundle of sleepless joy arrives!

**Have a come back plan:** Depending on your financial and support situation, you may need to get back to work sooner than most. Your basic medical recovery time for a natural birth is six weeks and eight weeks for a C-section delivery, nonetheless, you'll likely need more adjustment and recovery time than that. You also deserve to savour this special arrival! Consider starting back gradually and moderating your schedule. Discuss your options with your partner, family, group exercise and/or personal training manager in advance to create a plan that best suits your needs and personality.

**Prepare your clients:** Let your people know your mat leave plans and ensure them you will be back! While they may take on another trainer and classes during your mat leave, most of them will miss you and be eager for your return. Know that the time and effort you've put into your relationships goes a long way.

**Save up:** Perhaps you have another job that provides you EI or a partner who can support your mat leave. However, if you do not and your income is solely self-employed, then you will not qualify for EI (unless you have previously decided to pay into it). Even if you take the bare minimum time off, you should plan a two to three month financial buffer. Create a savings plan or anticipate dipping into your savings.

**Explore childcare options:** Take the time to investigate childcare options that are ideal for part-time or self-employed workers (i.e. nanny shares, group care or provincially funded daycares). The studios or gyms you work at may even offer childcare that you can take advantage of. Consider adjusting your schedule by stacking your hours (i.e. all clients and classes in the mornings) to best benefit from investing in childcare. Explore your childcare options in advance to put your mind at ease and get you back to work!



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# **EQUITY IN FITNESS**

**A WEIGHT-CENTRED FOCUS CAN BE DAMAGING THE  
WELL-BEING OF OUR CLIENTS**

*By Nina Dossall*



## **EMERGING RESEARCH IS CHALLENGING THE FITNESS INDUSTRY RIGHT DOWN TO ITS FOUNDATIONS, IMPACTING EVERYTHING: OUR SERVICE, MARKETING, FACILITIES AND EVEN OUR LONG-HELD BELIEFS ON HEALTH.**

### **THE ISSUE IS EQUITY: WE DON'T HAVE IT.**

We as fitness professionals are creating stigma and barriers to fitness. It's unintentional, but we are excluding many people from accessing our services and potentially hurting the clients we do have, both mentally and physically. If we want to continue in our efforts to be a valuable and effective service, we need to address what the science is now saying: focusing on a client's weight is no longer a valid or helpful assessment tool and can have lasting, negative repercussions on their own well-being, as well as the community at large.

While the research is still coming out, I think we can take a moment of pause and consider some of its key points.

#### **Using Body Mass Index (BMI) is not helpful.**

Most of us already know the many limitations of BMI. It's a 19th century mathematical formula invented by Adolphe Quetelet, then reinvented by Ancel Keys in the 1950's. It supposedly calculates a person's health status from their body weight and height. And we know this doesn't work for various populations such as bodybuilders and pregnant women.

But for those who have a high BMI score and are, by our assuming glance, unfit, it still doesn't tell us much of anything about their health. Nor does it give us any insight as to what actions we should take.

Consider a study of 40,000 elderly people, where those with a low BMI were actually at greater risk for health problems versus those with a BMI of 23 (classified "overweight") who showed significantly better health. Consider, too, that while obesity has been linked to

several medical issues like diabetes and cardiovascular disease, there are some with obese bodies that are metabolically healthy.

So, BMI can be very misleading. But maybe that's not enough to convince us to remove it from our screening forms because, well, what's the harm? Well, that's what the science is now showing us: there is harm, very real harm.

#### **Focusing on a client's weight and/or appearance puts their mental and physical health at risk.**

When we use weight and BMI as measurements for success with our clients - referred to now as a "weight-focused approach" - we are ignoring the bigger picture that is their actual health. Indeed, we could even be contributing to its detriment.

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**“...OUR WEIGHT-FOCUSED APPROACH IS MAKING PEOPLE FEEL EXCLUDED AND TOO ASHAMED TO ACCESS HEALTH AND FITNESS FACILITIES ...”**

---

Studies show that people who tried to lose weight, even with a focus on improving their health, have only regained it (and often more). We usually think it's because they didn't stick to the program and while that's true, there are biological reasons for that. There are also emotional reasons, poor urban planning reasons and discrimination reasons.

Let's start with the biological ones: simply put, our bodies are not programmed to lose weight. The body adapts so that it has a metabolic resistance to sustaining a reduced body weight. That means, after someone with a larger body loses a bunch of weight, their hunger cues go up and their metabolism goes down, even at the six year mark after weight loss. Six years of being hungry and your

body holding on to every single calorie it consumes. No wonder so many want to give up.

But many persevere. After they regain weight, they'll work hard and lose it again. And while I commend their discipline, this pattern of loss and regain comes at a hefty cost. Here's a direct quote:

"Repeated loss and regain of weight increases human deaths from heart disease, and in obese laboratory animals weight cycling increases blood pressure, enlarges the heart, damages the kidney, increases abdominal fat deposits, and promotes further weight gain."

This is where the real harm comes in. These are the very diseases we sought to avoid and it doesn't even stop there.

Teaching clients to focus on their weight could be damaging their self-esteem, leading to poor mental health. I, for one, have a history of negative body image and I'm certain that many fitness professionals can relate. It's not surprising that low self-esteem makes it very difficult to adopt healthy behaviours and even disconnects us from our bodies' natural hunger/fullness cues. And, if a client should slip and regain weight, they assume it's their fault, lose motivation and any sense of self-efficacy. And, cue the downward spiral, this leads to serious physical risks as we've seen above.

For ourselves, by blaming the client, we ignore the chance to investigate more deeply. We've seen now the biological reasons why a client is susceptible to falling off the bandwagon. We now know that having good mental health is critical in their success. But we can also look

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**SIMPLY PUT, OUR BODIES ARE NOT PROGRAMMED TO LOSE WEIGHT. THE BODY ADAPTS SO THAT IT HAS A METABOLIC RESISTANCE TO SUSTAINING A REDUCED BODY WEIGHT.**

---

to other factors such as the atmosphere we've created inside our facilities. Do we have the equipment, programs and knowledgeable trainers to accommodate bodies of every shape and size? If we now know that good health looks different on every body, do we show that in our banner ads and posters for our

fitness clubs? If not, what kind of message does that send?

**A weight-neutral approach to health and fitness has considerably better outcomes.**

At the University of California, researchers divided females who were classified obese into two groups. One group aimed to lose weight with a typical, regimented diet plan, while the other group was encouraged to accept their bodies while rebuilding an intuitive eating pattern. Intuitive Eating, a "non-diet" eating style founded in 1995 with Elyse Resch and Evelyn Tribole, has several principles, including neutralizing food; this means not labeling any food as good or bad. Another major principle is to reconnect an awareness of the body's natural hunger and satiety cues. In the study, they looked at both groups after six months: 41% of those in the dieting group stopped following their plan, while only 8% of the intuitive eating group was still making headway. And at two years, only the intuitive eating group had considerable long-term success.

Long term success. This is the ultimate goal of any fitness or health professional. It's scary to think how everything we do may seem to be fine until we find out much later that our actions are contraindicated and now the client will suffer the consequences. But if there is a system showing long-lasting, positive outcomes, how motivating is that as a



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client and as a health care provider? And it's not just the client who benefits. By adapting our services to have a weight-neutral approach, we could see an influx of clients and healthier, more active communities.

**By de-stigmatizing fitness, we make it accessible to all bodies.**

Right now, our weight-focused approach is making people feel excluded and too ashamed to access health and fitness facilities, and these are the people that could benefit the most!

The Government of Canada released a report earlier this year on how Canadians can increase their physical activity. It suggested a conjoined effort among organizations by taking more time to understand their community and its barriers to physical activity, and then use that information to provide the facility, services and language that makes physical activity inclusive for all. The report also noted that physical health, while important, cannot be held separate from other health variables such as social, financial and emotional.

For the fitness industry, this means we need to stop advertising our services with "lose weight fast" or "get a better body" with pictures of bodybuilders and bikini models, because it covertly shames all other healthy body shapes. It's this kind of language and media that lead to disordered eating, with the latest

being orthorexia, where an individual will become obsessive, fearful of eating anything deemed "unclean" such as processed foods, dairy or gluten.

Instead, we can sell our services as health and fitness coaches by demonstrating our bottom line: to make clients feel good in their own bodies. We are not a one-size-fits-all service, hence personal training. We are here to serve each and every client to meet their own unique goals and bodies. And our marketing can reflect that by showing all bodies, with varying abilities, colours, sizes, shapes, ages and backgrounds.

We can be more powerful advocates for health beyond our training services. Who says that the work that we do is limited to teaching clients how to use the lat pull machine? In Canada, dieticians have a history of creating social change. Personal training will always be an amazing service, but we can appreciate that it is only a part of a much larger picture of health-providing. Many factors contribute to disease, poor health and sedentary behaviour. It's become reflexive to simply blame lack of diet and exercise, while those could just be symptoms of a deeper issue or complex web of issues. If we know this, we can empower our client with that information and thus be pivotal in their health journey.

Better yet, we can be more proactive in shaping our communities to support

positive behaviours. For instance, we can advocate for subsidized programs for those with financial barriers. We can work with urban planners to create more facilities and structures that we can use to host our programs and classes. Best of all, we can nurture a culture free of body shame by educating and promoting the marvelous body of resources from the Health at Every Size movement, founded by the Association for Size Diversity and Health.

**Conclusion**

There is a lot of work to be done, but if there's one thing that the fitness industry is good at, it's adapting. I'm regretful of my own part in perpetuating stigma and shame, but I'm ready to learn and move forward. I am eager to see our industry evolve and play an even bigger role in creating an empowered and active community.



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A man wearing a black cap with the text "NO EXCUSE™" and a blue long-sleeved shirt is performing a squat in a gym. He is leaning forward with his arms extended, and his body is in a deep squat position. The background shows a concrete wall and a barbell with weights.

# OVERCOMING A DANGEROUS SQUAT

## CORRECTING MOVEMENT COMPENSATION WITH ASSESSMENT AND CORRECTIVE PROGRAMMING

*By Chad Benson, MSc, CSCS, CPT, Director of Education at Innovative Fitness*

**SHOULD PEOPLE  
SQUAT OR NOT?  
THERE'S A SIMPLE  
RULE WHEN IT  
COMES TO EXERCISE  
SELECTION.**

“Do more of what your  
body likes and less of  
what it dislikes.”

Pain during and after the workout, restricted range of motion, major movement compensation, repetitive muscle strain, and multiple visits to the chiropractor are all signs to abort. Heavy or explosive squatting is a high risk-high benefit fitness pursuit. But what if you could minimize the risks and maximize the gain? You can, but without postural symmetry and structure under load, squatting is dangerous. The path to success is assessment and corrective programming.

Squat performance is divided into two major categories: quality and quantity. To maximize the benefits and performance both need to be optimized. The squat is a foundational movement for athletes and fitness clients. Due to the back squat being associated with improvements in strength, power and acceleration, heavy squats are commonly used to develop athleticism, and quantify lower-body strength and power. Consequently, when one exercise has the potential



to set a solid foundation for sporting performance, many coaches aim to optimize back squat performance.

However, due to pattern overload, previous injury, and poor coaching most athletes and fitness clients have significant movement compensation while squatting. These compensations create non-optimal loading of the spine, hip, knee and ankle. Long-term, the common consequences of imbalanced loading are pain, reduced training effort or injury. Therefore, many fitness, rehab and sport performance professionals have made the overhead squat assessment fundamental to programming corrective strategies for the knee, hip and ankle. While the results are conflicting, most of the current research suggests that squat assessment is predictive of both future pain and injury.

The aim of this article is to provide trainers, coaches and rehabilitative specialist with an integrated system that will help improve movement competency via corrective strategies for:

- A. Anterior pelvic tilt
- B. Excessive forward lean

### Optimal Squat Alignment

Optimal alignment during a high-bar back squat is essential because of the risks that accompany movement compensation. For the purposes of this article we will examine how the following three things affect excessive forward lean and squat performance.

1. Base of support
2. Torso and tibia relations
3. Spinal curve

### Excessive Forward Lean (EFL)

During the back squat, the tibia and torso should remain parallel. When the center of gravity (i.e. belly button or slightly below for most people), is centered between and in alignment with the base of support (i.e. the middle of the foot tripod), the tibia and torso should be parallel to each other (Fig. 1). Imagine dropping a weighted string from your belly button to the middle of your feet an inch or two forward of the medial malleolus. If the torso shifts forward into a forward lean, the center of gravity must shift backwards to maintain balance (Fig. 2). When a forward torso angle occurs, typically:

1. The tibia remains vertical (limited knee and limited ankle dorsiflexion).
2. The trunk assumes a more horizontal

- position (excessive hip flexion).
3. The pelvis tilts anteriorly.

Research indicates that the most common issue associated with EFL is limited ankle ROM. This study demonstrated that subjects with a greater ROM in their ankles tended to be more upright during the back squat, thereby reducing EFL and increasing shear forces in the spine.



Fig. 1



Fig. 2

### Breakout Squat Assessments

Beyond the wall facing Overhead Squat Assessment in the canfitpro Personal Training Specialist textbook, additional assessments are required to guide corrective programming for the compensatory mechanisms previously discussed.

- Ankle Mobility Squat (Fig. 3) or FMS Ankle Clearing Test (not shown)
  - o Set up: Stand with feet at approximately hip width apart with both feet pointing straight ahead. Place the toes of the back foot in line with the heel of the front foot.
  - o While maintaining foot position and heels flat on the ground, squat,

bending the back knee as much as possible. Measure the distance of the back knee beyond the second and third toe.

- o Those with good ankle mobility are able to move their knee four to six inches past the second and third toe.



Fig. 3

- Modified Psoas Length Assessment
  - o Set-up: Lie supine with both legs straight. Keep head on ground and pull one knee to chest (Fig. 4). Observe the opposite leg for elevation from the floor and any external rotation.
  - o NB: If the leg elevates, it's indicative of an overactive hip flexor complex and the need to train the extensor chain (Fig. 5).



Fig. 4



Fig. 5

### Corrective Programming

Once the errors are detected, correct them. This is a very complex, multifaceted discussion. Work toward restoring ability and progress towards building capacity.

### Ability

1. Restore extensibility (Passive ROM)
2. Restore mobility (Active ROM)
3. Restore dynamic postural stability

### Capacity

1. Eccentric strength
2. Strength endurance
3. Power

### Check your work

After the corrective programming, ask these questions:

1. Was pain reduced or removed?
2. Did the assessment results improve?
3. Did the movement compensations improve (i.e. EFL)?

If all three have improved and these changes hold throughout the workout, ideally longer, keep going!

Shown in the table to the right are a few best practice solutions for restoring abilities and removing the potential causes of an EFL. They start with improving range of motion and capacity in isolation, and finish with integration. The ultimate reintegration is squatting while controlling movement quality.

There is a multitude of other ways to manage and create a safe and effective squat, including:


- change from a back squat to a front squat
- slowly progress load, range of motion, speed and volume of work

At the end of the day, 'ass to grass' might be a great gym code badge of honor, but remember this; most individuals can't achieve it without making the squat dangerous. If your squat is causing pain or you can't perform it without EFL, get assessed and corrected before continuing to do so.



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Ankle Mobility		
Exercise	Key Points	
Foot Tripod	<p>The foot tripod consists of an imaginary triangle formed when you draw a line from the base of the first and fifth metatarsal and the front of the heel.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maintain pressure in all three contacts</li> <li>- Pressure should be equal on both feet</li> <li>- Screw feet into floor to help establish glute activation and foot arch</li> <li>- This exercise will improve both ankle mobility and extensor profile</li> </ul>	
Hyperice™ Soleus Pin and Move	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Vibratory frequency 1 or 2</li> <li>- Place roller just below gastrocnemius</li> <li>- Shift and rotate leg side to side 10 times</li> <li>- Draw five large foot circles per direction</li> </ul>	
Hyperice™ Tibialis Anterior Activation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Vibratory frequency 1 or 2</li> <li>- Stimulate muscle (i.e. lateral to shin bone) for five seconds</li> <li>- Dorsiflex as high as possible and hold for five seconds</li> <li>- Repeat five times</li> </ul>	
Banded Rear Foot Squat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Set band in low position to create a backward pull on the rear foot</li> <li>- Perform test squat five times per foot</li> <li>- Hold bottom of squat five seconds and draw circles in both directions with the knee</li> </ul>	
Extensor Profile		
Exercise	Key Points	
Hyperice™ TFL Pin and Move	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No vibration and hold for 30 seconds</li> <li>- Shift and pull TFL side to side 10 times</li> </ul>	
Hyperice™ Glute Clam Activation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Vibratory frequency 1 or 2</li> <li>- Use several positions on glute</li> <li>- Achieve as much abduction ROM as possible</li> <li>- Perform two to four clams with a five sec hold each time</li> </ul>	
Cook Band Supine Extension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use a light to medium band</li> <li>- Maintain a neutral spine (i.e. slight gap to floor in lower back region)</li> <li>- Achieve and hold full extension in hips and shoulders (ideally the pinky fingers will be on the ground)</li> </ul>	



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# **WHY AM I NOT ALWAYS MOTIVATED?**

**LIMITING BELIEFS COULD BE HOLDING  
YOU BACK FROM YOUR GOAL**

*By Nathalie Plamondon-Thomas*

## **INSPIRATION AND MOTIVATION ARE OFTEN THOUGHT TO BE EXTERNAL - THAT WE NEED TO READ A BOOK, SIGN UP FOR A COURSE, SURROUND OURSELVES WITH LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE, ETC. YES, OF COURSE IT HELPS.**

The best and most important part, however, comes from within you. Your motivation comes from your own beliefs. A belief is what you believe is true, in your own representational systems, and is forming who you are. Beliefs are at the base of your habits (good or bad). If things are not working the way you want, you may need to change your old negative beliefs in order to replace them with beliefs that will serve you better.

"I just keep doing that thing I said I wasn't going to do."

Your choices defy logic as your unconscious mind rules.

**"IF YOU DON'T CHANGE YOUR BELIEFS, (...) ALL THE TIPS IN THE WORLD, THE BEST EXERCISES AND NUTRITION TIPS, EVEN APPLIED TO THE LETTER, WILL NOT WORK, OR WILL OFFER VERY TEMPORARY RESULTS."**

To use Vince Poscente's analogy, you feel like an ant plugging away in one direction, one step at a time, doing everything you can towards your goal but you don't realize that the ant is walking on the back of an elephant that is walking in the opposite direction.

The ant can go as fast as it can, but the elephant is exponentially so much bigger that, even in its best efforts, it will never counteract the direction the elephant

is going towards. That is why you may sometimes feel that you self-sabotage yourself. Your unconscious mind is so much more powerful, that even if logically you try to adopt new serving habits and behaviours, if your unconscious mind is not on board, like the elephant, it will take you in the opposite direction.

Somehow, you feel that you are doing everything right and plugging away with your behaviours and skills, but your dedicated steps toward your goal will be in vain, if your beliefs are going in the opposite direction.

If you don't change your beliefs, and help change the beliefs of your clients, all the tips in the world, the best exercises and nutrition tips, even applied to the letter, will not work, or will offer very temporary results. The beliefs that are not serving us are called limiting beliefs.

They explain why some of the past attempts at losing weight failed or why they gained it back. If your client believes they will always gain it back (beliefs) then exercising and eating well (both behaviours) will not fix the problem. They will keep self-sabotaging until they correct the beliefs.

### **Three steps to get rid of a limiting belief**

#### **Step 1: Put it behind you**

The first step to change is to linguistically start talking about the belief that you want to change, in the past tense. For example, let's say you think of yourself as being lazy. The voice inside your head (your logical mind) says: "I am so lazy".

Linguistically, you can start the transformation process by saying instead: "I used to be lazy". Unconsciously, as you speak of the characteristic as being in the past, you will start to believe that it is actually in the past, which is totally true. You used to be lazy. What this implies is that it is now over. That it is behind you. This affirmation will still feel true.

The next step is to follow this affirmation with a progressive statement.

#### **Step 2: Progressive statement**

Positive affirmations won't work if when you say them out loud they feel untrue. For example, when I work with clients going through grief they work on creating positive statements that feel true to them. I am working with a couple who have lost their daughter. This is a

terrible situation that no parent should ever have to experience. There is no way they can truly believe a positive affirmation worded like: "I am happy and excited about life!" Right now, their reality is very much the opposite. The same applies to people who are excessively overweight. They will likely have difficulty in looking at themselves in the mirror and saying: "I am thin, svelte and I love my body". Progressive statements are used to replace an old unwanted state, characteristic or behaviour. They usually would start with "I am in the process" or "I am willing to learn how it feels to" which would give them permission to be working towards the next level.

For example, the couple would say: "I am in the process of learning how to love life again and be happy with my spouse and my son" – yes, they also have a son to live for. The overweight person would say: "I am willing to learn how it feels to love my body, I am in the process of becoming thinner." A progressive statement regarding your past characteristic, laziness, would look like: "I am willing to learn how it feels to be more active" or "I am in the process of becoming active." Repetition of the progressive statements will allow you to start programming your brain with different ideas that will soon become your new reality.

#### **Step 3: New serving beliefs and new identity**

After a few months, you will want to create new serving beliefs for yourself and start acting upon your new identity. You transition from the "I am willing to" or "I am in the process of" to the "I am" statement. Eventually, you will start repeating for yourself: "I am active", "I love my new identity of being active", "I am easily on the move."



*Founder of the **THINK Yourself® ACADEMY**, Speaker, Master Life Coach, No.1 Best-Selling Author of seven books on wellness and empowerment, and 2007 Fitness Instructor of the Year, Nathalie Plamondon-Thomas combines 25 years in sales and 30 years in the fitness industry. She uses neuroscience to get you transformational results.*

# 2 PROVEN STRATEGIES FOR FALL PREVENTION



## LEARNING TO PREVENT A FALL NEEDS TO INCLUDE CONDITIONING OF STRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS HEAD TO TOE

*By Margot McKinnon, B.A., B.Ed., M.Ed.  
Body Harmonics Founder and Education Director*

**THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION DEFINES HEALTHY AGING AS “... THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING THE FUNCTIONAL ABILITY THAT ENABLES WELLBEING IN OLDER AGE.”**

At ground level, this translates to people feeling able to be and do what they find valuable and fulfilling.

Evidence shows that an active lifestyle is critical to healthy aging. But that goes beyond modifying a workout routine appropriate for the 20-something physique to make it “gentle” for the maturing body. Seniors need more than light hand weights and a slow pace. As we age, physical, mental and emotional changes need to be considered and addressed in exercise programs of any intensity or duration.

One activity critical to seniors’ wellbeing is fall prevention. Most people imagine this to mean balancing on one foot and

learning how to get up off the floor. While these activities are important, learning to prevent a fall needs to include conditioning of structures and systems head to toe. Multisensory training and foot and ankle exercises are two examples that improve a person’s ability to balance, shift weight, and navigate changing terrain. Both can be done in short or long intervals and both are excellent for home programs or on the road.

### **Multisensory training**

With multisensory training, the sensorimotor, the visual and vestibular systems are targeted. All three are involved with maintaining equilibrium. Changing the environment to stimulate

one system over the others is a simple way to conduct this type of training and a fun way to challenge both body and mind. Altering the body position, closing one or both eyes, or using different types of surfaces—cushiony, spiky, stable, or unstable—are all examples of changing the environment. The key is working on the systems that control balance and not just on balance exercises.

Example of a multisensory exercise sequence:

- Sit on a chair and do arm movements
- Sit on a balance cushion on a chair and do arm movements
- Sit on a balance cushion on a chair, close eyes and do arm movements
- Sit on a balance cushion on a chair, close eyes, turn to one side slightly, and do arm movements

### Mobility for feet and ankles

People who can align their centre of mass (body) directly above their base of support (feet) during quiet standing can sway as much as 12° in a forward-backward direction (8° forward and 4° backward) and 16° laterally before they must take a step. This ability to sway without taking a step is referred to as a stability limit. In older adults who are beginning to experience balance problems, stability limits decrease, especially in the backward and lateral directions. The result is an increased risk of falling.

What causes a decrease in stability limits?

- Weak ankle muscles and reduced range of motion in the ankles

- Neurological trauma such as stroke or Parkinson's disease

Exercises to improve stability limits:

- Wiggle toes in as many directions as possible
- Plantar and dorsiflex ankles (point and flex feet)
- Draw circles with feet
- Draw the alphabet with feet
- Squat with an emphasis on ankle motion (bending at the ankles)

To see additional exercises for increasing mobility in the feet and ankles, check out the following videos on the Body Harmonics YouTube channel: *Wake Your Feet and Legs – Ballet Toe Stretch* and *Less is More for Strong Ankles*.

In the common aging-related doomsday scenario, people imagine life as an old person to include living in a body that loses muscle strength and bone density by the minute. Aging gets equated with chronic aches and pains, varying degrees of cognitive decline, and social isolation

**“SENIORS NEED MORE THAN LIGHT HAND WEIGHTS AND A SLOW PACE.”**

with no sense of purpose.

General physical activity is not the panacea for aging, but when healthy aging is the main objective, physical, mental and

**“THE KEY IS WORKING ON THE SYSTEMS THAT CONTROL BALANCE AND NOT JUST ON BALANCE EXERCISES.”**

emotional needs of our senior population can be met easily with thoughtful and thorough exercise programming. By 2021, one in five Canadians will be over the age of 65, and one in three over the age of 55. By 2061, it is projected that there will be 12 million seniors to eight million children. These compelling numbers should be a wake-up call for all of us working in the fields of exercise and movement education to learn what creates the best results for older adults and why.



*Margot McKinnon founded Body Harmonics in 1998 with the vision of creating a centre for movement and health that*

*is rich in learning, exploration and fun. A professional adult educator, presenter, sought-after media personality, and comprehensively trained and certified Pilates teacher, Margot's focus is on making Pilates and Movement safe, effective and accessible to all! [bodyharmonics.com](http://bodyharmonics.com)*

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# DEUX STRATÉGIES EPROUVÉES POUR ÉVITER LES CHUTES

**APPRENDRE À PRÉVENIR LES CHUTES DOIT INCLURE LE CONDITIONNEMENT DES STRUCTURES ET DES SYSTÈMES DE LA TÊTE AUX PIEDS.**

***Par Margot McKinnon, B.A., B.Ed., M.Ed.  
Fondatrice et directrice de la formation chez Body Harmonics***





# L'ORGANISATION MONDIALE DE LA SANTÉ DÉFINIT « VIEILLIR EN SANTÉ » COMME ÉTANT « LE PROCESSUS QUI FAVORISE LE DÉVELOPPEMENT ET LE MAINTIEN DES CAPACITÉS FONCTIONNELLES QUI PERMETTENT DE VIEILLIR EN SANTÉ ET D'ÊTRE BIEN. »

Plus concrètement, cela se traduit par des gens qui se sentent en mesure d'accomplir des choses qu'ils considèrent être utiles et épanouissantes.

L'expérience démontre qu'une vie active est critique au vieillissement en santé. Mais cela va au-delà de la modification d'une routine d'entraînement conçue initialement pour les gens dans la vingtaine pour la rendre plus « douce » au corps d'une personne plus mature. Les personnes âgées ont besoin de plus que de simples poids libres plus légers et d'un rythme plus lent. Alors que nous vieillissons, les changements physiques, mentaux et émotionnels doivent être pris en considération dans les programmes d'exercices, peu importe l'intensité ou la durée.

L'une des activités critiques au bien-être des aînés est la prévention des chutes. La plupart des gens imaginent qu'il suffit de se tenir en équilibre sur un pied et d'apprendre à se relever. Bien que ces activités soient importantes, apprendre à prévenir les chutes doit inclure le conditionnement des structures et des systèmes de la tête aux pieds. Un entraînement multisensoriel ainsi que des exercices pour les pieds et les chevilles sont deux exemples de ce qui contribue à l'amélioration de l'habileté d'une personne à garder son équilibre, balancer son poids, et de naviguer sur un sol changeant. Les deux peuvent être effectués en intervalles longs ou courts, et les deux sont tout à fait indiqués aux programmes à domicile ou nomade.

## Entraînement multisensoriel

Les systèmes sensorimoteur, visuel et vestibulaire sont ciblés par l'entraînement

multisensoriel. Ces trois systèmes sont sollicités dans le maintien de l'équilibre. Changer d'environnement pour stimuler un de ces systèmes plutôt que les deux autres est une façon simple d'exécuter ce type d'entraînement, en plus d'être une façon amusante de stimuler le corps et l'esprit. Changer la position du corps, fermer un œil, ou utiliser différents types de surface — coussiné, cabossé, stable ou instable — sont tous des exemples d'environnements changeants. La clé est d'exercer les systèmes qui contrôlent l'équilibre, pas seulement d'exécuter des exercices d'équilibre.

Exemple de séquence d'exercices multisensoriels :

- S'asseoir sur une chaise et exécuter des mouvements avec les bras ;
- S'asseoir sur un coussin d'équilibre sur une chaise et exécuter des mouvements avec les bras ;
- S'asseoir sur un coussin d'équilibre sur une chaise, fermer les yeux et exécuter des mouvements avec les bras ;
- S'asseoir sur un coussin d'équilibre sur une chaise, fermer les yeux, se tourner légèrement sur un côté et exécuter des mouvements avec les bras.

## Mobilité des pieds et des chevilles

Une personne qui peut aligner son centre de gravité directement au-dessus de sa base d'appui (pieds), peut, lorsqu'elle se tient debout sans bouger, tanguer jusqu'à 12° vers l'avant ou vers l'arrière (8° vers l'avant et 4° vers l'arrière) et de 16° latéralement avant de devoir faire un pas. Cette habileté est appelée « limite de stabilité ». Chez les adultes aînés qui commencent à expérimenter des problèmes d'équilibre, les limites de stabilité diminuent, plus particulièrement vers l'arrière et latéralement. Ce qui entraîne un risque accru de chute.

Quelles sont les causes de la diminution des limites de stabilité ?

- Muscles affaiblis et amplitude de mouvement réduite des chevilles ;
- Trauma neurologique comme un AVC ou la maladie de Parkinson.

Exercices pour améliorer les limites de stabilité :

- Faire bouger les orteils dans toutes les directions possibles ;
- Flexion et dorsiflexion plantaires (pointer et contracter les pieds) ;
- Faire des cercles avec les pieds ;
- Dessiner les lettres de l'alphabet avec les pieds ;
- Faire des accroupissements (squats) en mettant l'accent sur le mouvement de la cheville (fléchir au niveau des chevilles).

## « LA CLÉ EST D'EXERCER LES SYSTÈMES QUI CONTRÔLENT L'ÉQUILIBRE, PAS SEULEMENT D'EXÉCUTER DES EXERCICES D'ÉQUILIBRE. »

Pour voir plus d'exercices visant l'amélioration de la mobilité des pieds et des chevilles, visionnez les vidéos suivantes sur le canal YouTube de Body Harmonics : *Wake Your Feet and Legs* – *Ballet Toe Stretch and Less is More for Strong Ankles*.

Dans les scénarios apocalyptiques les plus courants à propos du vieillissement, les gens s'imaginent que leur corps perdra tout tonus musculaire et densité osseuse lentement mais sûrement. Le troisième âge est souvent associé aux douleurs chroniques, au déclin cognitif, à l'isolation sociale, et au sentiment d'être inutile.

L'activité physique n'est pas le remède miracle au vieillissement, mais lorsque vieillir en santé est l'objectif principal, les besoins en matière de santé physique, mentale et émotionnelle de nos aînés peuvent facilement être satisfaits grâce à un programme d'exercices réfléchi et rigoureux. D'ici 2021, un Canadien sur cinq sera âgé de plus de 65 ans, et un sur trois aura plus de 55 ans. D'ici 2061, la projection est de 12 millions de personnes âgées pour huit millions d'enfants. Lorsque nous lisons ces statistiques, un signal d'alarme devrait retentir dans la tête de tous ceux qui œuvrent dans l'industrie du conditionnement physique pour qu'ils découvrent ce qui entraînera les meilleurs résultats pour nos aînés en matière d'activités physiques, et pourquoi.



*Margot McKinnon a fondé Body Harmonics en 1998 avec pour vision la création d'un centre pour le mouvement et*

*la santé axée sur l'apprentissage, l'exploration, et le plaisir. Elle est andragogue, conférencière, personnalité médiatique prisée, et instructrice de Pilates dûment formée et certifiée, sa priorité est de rendre la pratique du Pilates sécuritaire, efficace et accessible à tous. [bodyharmonics.com](http://bodyharmonics.com)*

A smiling woman with blonde hair, wearing sunglasses, a pink and black jacket, and a backpack, stands in a snowy forest. She is holding ski poles. A large, shaggy dog is sitting next to her. The background consists of evergreen trees and snow.

# YOGA FOR WINTER- WEATHER SPORTS

**LIMIT INJURIES WITH A SERIES OF POSTURES TO COUNTERACT  
LONG PERIODS OF FORWARD FLEXION**

***By Beth Shaw, Founder/  
CEO YogaFit Training Systems Worldwide***



**IF YOU'RE A REGULAR OUTDOOR EXERCISER IN THE COLDEST MONTHS OF THE YEAR, THEN YOU ALREADY KNOW THAT YOUR MUSCLES AND BODY GROW TIGHTER IN COOLER CLIMATES, AND YOUR JOINT CONNECTIONS GROW STIFFER IN THE COLD, ESPECIALLY AS YOU GET OLDER.**

Most fitness experts do recommend that you not only warm up prior to starting your sport, but also finish off your activity with a few minutes of sports-specific stretching. The brief posture series included here targets overused and overworked muscles involved in cold-weather sports, especially activities where your body is folded in forward flexion. These poses relieve stress and tension in the lower back, hips, hamstrings and hip flexors, and prevent cold-weather injuries.

Despite cool weather exercise popularity, statistics on cold weather related injuries are hard to come by. One thing fitness experts do agree on though: running, skiing, skating and hiking outside in the cold forces the body into long periods of forward flexion, leaning slightly forward from the waistline and lower back.

This postural alignment stresses major muscles of the mid-to-low back, and tightens muscles all along the back of the body, from the upper back to the hamstrings, glutes and calves. Instead of simply stretching your legs at the end of an arduous hike, try performing this short series of yoga poses to counteract gravitational forces. You'll avoid injury, reduce aches and muscle tension, and be ready to tackle another 'mountain' tomorrow.

Feel free to use these postures either before your sport, during the week to cross-train or even afterwards, to utilize as a stretching aid. Try to hold each posture for five to 10 deep breaths (breathe only through the nose) as often as you can or count 20 to 40 seconds. Repeat as needed.

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## **ONE OF THE BIGGEST MISTAKES YOU CAN MAKE WHILE EXERCISING IN COLD WEATHER IS TO DRESS TOO WARMLY.**

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**Chest Expansion:** Opens the chest, pulls shoulders back and down, squeezes shoulder blades together and eases mid-back muscles.



Stand with knees slightly bent and interlace hands together behind your lower back with palms as close to touching as possible. Lift arms off your butt and relax muscles of the face and neck as you arch back, lifting the chest for 20 seconds. Then engage the belly and slowly fall forward, folding the upper body in close to the shins. Keep hands interlaced and press knuckles up to the sky for another 30 seconds. Bend knees deeply and roll up one vertebra at a time.

**Cobra:** Strengthens and stretches postural muscles along upper- to lower-back.



Lie on the belly and stretch the legs long in back of you, toes touching the floor and thighs engaged. Place your hands adjacent to the top of the ribcage, roll your shoulder blades down your back, look down the end of your nose and breathe deeply. Slowly begin to peel your chest off the mat, keeping bent elbows tucked into your ribcage and hold for up to 30 seconds before slowly working in reverse until forehead touches the mat. Repeat this several times, coming up higher each time, yet keeping hip bones glued to the floor.

**Pyramid Pose:** Eases the hamstrings, soothes the hips and lower back and stretches the spine.



Stand with left leg approximately a foot or two in front of you, both feet straight and parallel (not on the same line). Square your hips to the front, place hands at your hips and engage the belly. Slowly hinge forward from the hips and begin curling your torso over your left shin. Hold for 20 seconds or so. Place as much body weight as you can into the rear foot, keeping the front knee soft and then slowly reach hands down to each side of the front foot (or on the calf if hamstrings are tight). When you're ready to come up, bend both knees and roll back up, then switch sides.

**Upside down pigeon:** Stretches the hips, glutes, legs and lower body.



Lie face up on the floor with knees bent and bring knees over the belly. Cross left ankle over right knee and reach through to grasp right hamstring with both hands. Flex your left foot and point your right toes, keeping your tailbone on the mat at all times. To deepen the stretch, you

might pull right knee in toward the body. Switch sides.

Almost everyone can exercise safely during cold weather, but if you have certain conditions such as asthma or heart problems, check with your doctor before you head outside.

**Safety tips for cold weather exercise:**

**Dress in layers**

One of the biggest mistakes you can make while exercising in cold weather is to dress too warmly. Exercise generates a considerable amount of heat — enough to make you feel like it's much warmer than it really is. Yet, once your sweat starts to dry, you can get chilled.

Dress in layers that you can remove as soon as you start to sweat and then put back on as needed. First, put on a thin layer of synthetic material, such as polypropylene, which draws sweat away from your body. Avoid cotton, which

**WHEN IT'S COLD, BLOOD FLOW IS CONCENTRATED ON YOUR BODY'S CORE, LEAVING YOUR HANDS AND FEET VULNERABLE TO FROSTBITE.**

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stays wet next to your skin. Next, add a layer of fleece or wool for insulation. Top this with a waterproof, breathable outer layer. A heavy down jacket or vest may cause you to overheat if you're exercising hard. If you're lean, you may need more insulation than someone who is heavier. If it's very cold, consider wearing a face mask or scarf to warm the air before it enters your lungs.

**Protect your hands, feet and ears**

When it's cold, blood flow is concentrated on your body's core, leaving your hands and feet vulnerable to frostbite. Try wearing a thin pair of gloves under a pair of heavier gloves or mittens lined with wool or fleece. Use mittens or gloves before your hands become cold and then remove them if your hands begin to sweat.

**YOU'LL AVOID INJURY, REDUCE ACHEs AND MUSCLE TENSION, AND BE READY TO TACKLE ANOTHER 'MOUNTAIN' TOMORROW.**

Buy work out shoes a half-size or one size larger than usual to allow for thick thermal socks or an extra pair of regular socks. Wear a hat or earmuffs to protect your ears, which are also vulnerable to frostbite.

**Pay attention to weather conditions and wind chill**

Exercising when it's cold and raining can make you more vulnerable to the cold. If you get soaked, you may not be able to keep your core body temperature high enough, and layering won't help if your clothes are wet. If it's extremely cold, you may need to take your exercise indoors or skip it for a day or two.

Wind chill extremes can make exercising outdoors unsafe, even if you dress warmly. The wind can penetrate your clothes and remove the insulating layer of warm air that surrounds your body, and any exposed skin is vulnerable to frostbite.

If the temperature dips well below 0 F (-17.8 C) or the wind chill is extreme, consider taking a break or choosing an indoor activity instead, or take extra precautions if you choose to exercise outdoors anyway.

**Choose appropriate gear**

If it's dark when you exercise outside, wear reflective clothing. To stay steady on

your feet, choose footwear with enough traction to prevent falls, especially if it's icy or snowy. Wear a helmet while skiing, snowboarding and snowmobiling. Chemical heat packs may warm up your hands or feet.

Getting outdoors for exercise is one of the most refreshing and rewarding forms of winter cardiovascular activity. Be safe, do yoga and enjoy fitness year round!




*Beth Shaw, ERYT 500 and C-IAYT, is the CEO and Founder of YogaFit Training Systems Worldwide. She is the author of three books: YogaFit, YogaLean and YogaFit for Athletes. Beth has spent time in India and Asia studying yoga, and in addition to a bachelor's degree in Business Administration and Nutrition, she holds numerous certifications in mind-body disciplines. yogafit.com*




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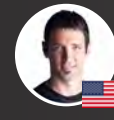
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