

GETTING IN SHAPE

Getting in shape is a great decision! Nevertheless, it is for many of us quite overwhelming. This feeling comes from all directions: society, marital partners, commercial demands created by fitness and nutritional companies, the dictating aches and pains of our bodies, and the memory of our shape in years past. These and probably many more thoughts or reasons, either oppressed or self-created, are what convince us that getting in shape is an almost unreachable goal. Add to this the numerous attempts to get in shape that have failed, and we are faced with an impossible proposition. I need to get in shape. But how, and where? Is it really worth it? Is it really going to work?

Let us take a look at it. Our society offers a wide variety of programs, including nutrition, weight-loss, fitness, motivation, etc., each one promising phenomenal results. But which one will work for you? It's not an easy question, is it? No wonder there are still people that do not succeed with "getting in shape!" I am positive everyone has heard about people that had tried most of these programs, and some have basements full of home equipment that failed to give them the desired results. It is a tough pill to swallow, and it drives people into apathy every time they go through the expense and the roller coaster of hope and despair. The result is that we become distrustful when, and if, genuine advice comes around. We are just not able to choose the right way to go in the maze. The advertising companies lead us to believe they know the way out. We have also entered the age where the consumer no longer has to take responsibility. In promoting passive exercise promotion, the time saving multi-purpose equipment, drugs, etc., they will actually tell you that your behavior is acceptable and will convince you to try something that fits your current lifestyle.

What I am going to tell you now may be shocking and will definitely cause some people to become upset. However, I am not looking to win a popularity contest, and I suggest you continue to read because this is simple and true. The news I have for you is that your behavior is that one main factor that leads you to getting "out of shape" in the first place. Let me prove it to you. Recall a time when you were in shape. Make two columns and write out the activities you were involved in, physically on one side and mentally on the other. Now, look at your existing activities and list them out on the paper. Compare these two lists. I am sure you will find less physical activities, less joy (apathy), increased stress and probably some very specific individual factors that have changed for the worse.

Now I would like to give you some advice. I have learned that there are two aspects to help getting someone on the right track. The first being a decision that something can be done. The second, acting on that decision. Upon completion of this action(s), your goals will be accomplished. So, you have looked at your current state, "out of shape." You know what you would like your shape to be. You can see there is either a small gap or large gap between your current and ideal situation. Your task is now to find on aspect of your behavior you can easily decide to change. Then decide to actually get it done. Check on how you are doing. You will soon find more things you can change, and start "getting in shape." The only thing you really control is you. Just be sure to start with something you can confront easily. That is what I call true courage. I wish you many successes on your way to "getting in shape."

- Rob Collewijn, PT and Founder of Health Motion



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