

Episode 051: Let Go of the Past... Focus On Your Future

There is some very unique training that certain components of the military go through. Soldiers are given minimal equipment, if anything at all. They're not told where they're going yet they're transported to a destination with little notice, dropped off and then they're told to get to a specific location by a specific date and time. The point of this type of training is to teach the soldiers how to deal with the uncomfortable, how to deal with unfamiliar situations. But things like this also highlight the need to focus on what really matters. This is the TD Fitness Podcast with Coach T, episode number 51.

Welcome to the TD Fitness Podcast, giving you healthy living insights for your physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being. And now your host, certified health coach and personal trainer Coach T.

So in the military training example, the point is it doesn't matter how you got there. All that matters is what you need to do to reach your destination. There's a process to reach that destination. It's usually broken down into some variant of the following steps. First you do some kind of quick survey of the situation or you observe what's going on around you, then you orient yourself to the situation you're given. Then you decide on a course of action and then finally, you carry out that action. I'll say that this pattern of observing your surroundings and getting your bearings and determining which way to go and then acting, that's not new.

There are a lot of different variants depending on the discipline that you choose. But it's important to note that the more important it becomes to move forward in an endeavor or to make progress towards a goal, or to accomplish a mission, as those things become more and more important, what becomes less important is spending time trying to figure out how you got there. Let's think about fitness for a moment and specifically I want you to focus on context. For example, if I tell you that Natalie, for example, walked a mile this past weekend. That likely doesn't mean much to you. I mean, who's Natalie after all.

Well, if you know that Natalie has struggled with being overweight, an obese since her early 20s and that she's battled with self-doubt and she suffers from pain associated with just from walking. And that it's been a goal of hers for the past year to go a mile on her feet, then the fact that she walked a mile this past weekend means more to you, and you probably feel very happy for you. Similarly, if I told you that Daniela walked a mile this past weekend. Again, you may wonder who's Daniela? Well, if I tell you that Daniela is my two-year-old daughter, then that puts things into context. That's quite an accomplishment for a two-year-old.

But if I say that Daniela walked a mile this past weekend and I'm talking about Daniela Ryf, the 3-time Ironman champion and world record holder. Her walking a mile doesn't mean much to you at all. Of course, she can walk a mile, she can run a marathon at record pace after swimming two and a half miles and biking for 112. So context is key. But it's only important for the here and the now. Daniela Ryf may have struggled with the same things that Natalie struggled with, but the fact that she's an elite athlete right now, that frames our expectation of what she can do going forward. It's somewhat easy to understand this concept but it's more difficult to apply in our own situation at times.

Instead of focusing on our own health and fitness status right now, we tend to spend time thinking about how he looked five years ago or how he looked last year or last week or yesterday, but none of that really matters. Your current state does matter but only in the

sense that you have to start from somewhere. What really matters is what you're going to do right now to move forward. Where you were does not matter. Where you are now is only important in the sense that you have to start from somewhere because you have to orient yourself. This was the topic of episode number two, assessing your diet like a pro and episode number three, where we talked about how healthy are you. So yes, get a good idea of where you are, worry less about how you got there and focus more on where you're going.

From a mental wellness standpoint, there are two big hurdles to overcome with the concept of accepting your current situation and moving forward with a purpose with the intent to improve. The first hurdle is that we don't easily forget. After all, the future is unknown and sometimes it's daunting to try to anticipate what's going to happen. Or there may be anxiety associated with what might happen. The past, on the other hand, is known. We may not be happy with the past but at least it's a constant that will not change. Therefore, we tend to think a lot about the past and at the same time feel anxious about the future, uncertain about the future.

The second hurdle with accepting your current situation and moving forward with a purpose is that we feel like we have to compare. We compare ourselves to others, we compare our current selves to our past selves. But comparing, that has a few side effects, negative side effects. It tends to put the focus on things that we cannot control. We can't control what we're comparing ourselves to whether it's that other person or how we looked five years ago. That's all someone else's issue or that's in our past, we have no control over that. Secondly, it takes attention from what we can and should be focused on, which is improving our current state.

I want to encourage you when it comes to mental wellness, don't let the past weigh you down, let it go. That's probably the biggest mental impediment in moving forward, that we can't control our past, we can only focus on our future. So where you are right now is important but it's not as important as where you're going. Oftentimes, this topic of moving forward and forgetting the past is associated with relationships and those close to you. What I mean by that is sometimes there may be someone that you were close to but now you no longer communicate with, for example, maybe because you had a disagreement. The unfortunate reality is that this is common. It's happened to me, I've been the cause of it, I've played stubborn for too long in the past.

The truth is, that when it comes to friendships, when it comes to relationships and when it comes to family, there are certain expectations that we all have. Whether we verbalize them or not or whether we consciously think about them or not, they are there. When something happens that goes against what we expected or what we think we deserve in a friendship or in a relationship or from a family member, it can absolutely rub us the wrong way. When this happens, it's important though, it's important to forgive. Forgive until it's uncomfortable, do it constantly and forgive consistently. Because resentment and unforgiveness, it'll eat at you.

It's been said that unforgiveness is like drinking a cup of poison hoping that it affects the other person, and the truth of the matter is that the only person it negatively affects is you. Remember, forgiveness does not excuse the other person's behavior, it prevents that behavior from destroying your heart. It's interesting that this theme of forgiveness and letting go of the past dovetails right into our next point of forgetting the past and moving forward from a spiritual aspect.

Now, I can't help but feel encouraged when I think about the fact that my belief in God means that I've been accepted by him just the way that I am, imperfections and all. I'm forgiven for everything because I've chosen to accept him and ask for his forgiveness. God doesn't dwell on the past, he gives us the gift of forgiveness. In Paul's letter to the Ephesians, he encourages us

to be kind to one another. Tender-hearted, forgiving one another just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

As we wrap up this episode, I want to encourage you to number one, understand where you are from a physical fitness and nutrition standpoint, but focus less on how you got there and focus more on improving. Secondly, don't let comparison and negative thoughts from the past affect your mental wellness. Also, take time right now to forgive someone who's wronged you, don't wait. Finally, remember that God loves you and accepts you just the way you are no matter what. All right guys, before I sign off I want to let you know that I am opening the question line back up so you can call in and leave a question on the line. I'll send or I'll select a few maybe to answer in the next episode. It can be related to the topic of this episode or anything else that's on your mind. I'm really looking forward to getting some feedback and some dialogue going.

To hit me on the question line just dial 1-888-TDFIT01. That's 1-888-833-4801 and select option three, that'll take you directly to the voicemail and you can leave your message, leave your question, leave your name if you like, I'll give you a shout out. You can also hit me up on the Facebook page, the TD Fitness Facebook page, that's [tdfitness.net/facebook](https://www.tdfitness.net/facebook). Also, just hit me up and let me know how you like the new format of applying these healthy living themes and principles to the fitness, the mental wellness, the social and the spiritual aspects of your life.

Again, this is something that I wanted to do to kind of broaden the healthy living arena that I present to you guys, broaden the topics in a sense. So I hope you like it but I welcome your feedback and really look forward to it. As always, the show notes for this episode will be posted by the time you listen to this at [tdfitness.net/051](https://www.tdfitness.net/051) for this episode and stay tuned. You'll hear a little bit about my signature program, the Fit Life program. As always guys, thanks so much for tuning in, I want you to have a blessed one. Coach T out.

Why did I create the Fit Life program? I wanted to provide something that wasn't just for weight loss, not just for feeling better, not even just for better health, I wanted a more complete solution. I also wanted to make it sustainable. It's not just about starting something or sticking with it for a month or two, healthy living, which includes fitness, nutrition and a healthy mindset is about practicing healthy habits consistently. Not all the time because no one is perfect. But practicing those healthy habits more than you are right now. That's how change begins and that's how healthy living continues. Find out more at [fitlifeprogram.com](https://www.fitlifeprogram.com) or [tdfitness.net/fitlife](https://www.tdfitness.net/fitlife).