

December 2019 Fit Clips

This is the TD Fitness podcast with Coach T, episode number 91.

Welcome to the TD Fitness podcast, giving you ways to live a healthy lifestyle, without giving up the things that make life worth living. And now your host, certified health coach and personal trainer, Coach T.

Hey guys, Coach T here back with you for another episode of the TD Fitness podcast. And this episode is again a compilation, if you will, of all of the fit vids or the short clips that I've been producing in social media, that relate to how you can implement health and fitness habits in your lives, and a lot of it has to do more specifically with the mindset and outlook in moving forward. So this is something that I hope it is beneficial for you as we move into the new year. I know typically, as we move into the new year, a lot of people have a number of health and fitness goals, and goals for healthier living. So I encourage you to take a listen, and hopefully this is helpful. Enjoy.

I recently read something from Craig Rochelle. It was in a devotional on leadership and he said, "If you want to be who you've always been, then do what you've always done, but if you want to change who you are, then you have to change what you do." And I know that that is so much easier said than done. I mean, just about everything that I talk about either here or on the podcast, or with those that I coach and train, is about change. And I know that change is hard, because it's not short term. That's a test drive, right? Real change is long term, and what makes it difficult is that you have to actually do something different than you've been doing. And in many cases. The requirement is that you keep doing that new thing.

But perhaps the most difficult thing about change is really embracing it. It's deciding to change, and then believing that you can. But again, as Craig Rochelle says, "If you want to be who you've always been, then do what you've always done, but if you want to change who you are, then change what you do." It starts with belief. You can do this.

Why now? That is a completely fair question. I'd offer that an equally fair question is, why not now? So to put it in health or fitness terms, why should you take a step toward healthier living now? Well, instead, maybe ask yourself why you shouldn't. Why shouldn't I start now? You see, if you want your future to be different than your past or present, then you have to shape it. In fact, forget about asking why, or why not now. Instead, I want you to ask yourself what you want your future self to be. The logical question then becomes, "What could I do today that would matter a year from now?" Or better yet, "What habit could I start today that would make a difference next year?" The best time to plant a tree was 30 years ago. The second best time is right now.

Belief versus truth. Each one has its place, but I'm going to offer a little bit of perspective here. So when I say to you, "You have to believe that you can do this. You have to believe that you can lose weight. You have to believe that you can run a mile, or 13, or 26. You have to believe that you can complete a triathlon," it's because I have witnessed over and over again in life, in work, in faith, in career, and in love, that what you believe has an effect on the outcome, the outcome that then becomes your truth. So whether you believe your car won't run out of gas has nothing to do with the truth of the amount of gas that you have in your car, but that example involves an inanimate object and something that we can measure, which is the amount of gas in your tank.

But how does one measure the amount of gas in my personal tank? I can't measure the amount of grit or determination, or belief or hope that you have, but what I can tell you, is that if you don't have any, if you don't believe, your chances of success at the goal that you hope to achieve, are very slim. So yes, belief and truth are two different things, but your belief and your truth are inextricably linked.

On any type of journey, things pop up, unexpected things. You can call it Murphy's law, you can call it fate, but the fact remains that things often don't go as planned, and when you look at this from a healthy living perspective, of course there are things that are there to get in our way, right? Sometimes it's the things we know about, other times it's the obstacles that we don't expect. But here's how you deal with those things. First, for the ones that you know will come, try to plan for those things. If you're expecting a busy day at work, then pack a lunch, so you aren't relegated to the vending machines. If you're planning to exercise in the morning, then lay out your clothes and what you'll wear beforehand, and pre-pack your gym bag, so that there's absolutely smooth sailing when you wake up.

And what do you do when unexpected things pop up? Well, really, you just have to roll with those things, and more importantly than that, learn from them, because if you learn from them, then maybe the next time they won't be unexpected. So again, plan ahead, be flexible, and learn from your experiences. That's how you deal with Murphy.

Sometimes we don't reach our goals, simply because we don't stick to our strengths, and we don't build on the things that we're good at. When we try to do something that's in direct competition with who we are, then that road is extremely difficult. If you're completely averse to eating vegetables, for example, then don't try to change your diet to eat vegetables overnight. If you don't like to run, then try a different form of cardiovascular activity. This goes back to the concept of making small improvements in our current habits, versus trying to holistically change our habits all together. You have to take small steps. You have to improve little by little, because in the long run, you'll find that those small changes are actually easier to maintain, and that you'll get better and better at them over time. Previous prime minister of Israel, Golda Meir, is quoted as saying, "Make the most of yourself by fanning the tiny inner sparks of possibility into flames of achievement."

You have permission. Sometimes, that's all we need to hear, and there are a number of perceived barriers that serve no purpose in life, except to limit us in our beliefs and in what we can accomplish. Why don't you think that you can cut back on processed carbs? Are you really so busy that you can't get seven hours of sleep on most nights of the week? And what do you mean you're not a runner? What makes a runner a runner, is the fact that they run. It's not how you're built, it's not how fast or how slow you go, or how hard or difficult it is for you, it's the action you take toward your goals.

A brand new graduate from medical school is called a doctor, just like the surgeon who's been practicing it for 20 years. If you start taking action toward your goal today, then you become who you want to become. She is someone who eats healthier by limiting processed carbs. He is someone who makes time to get seven hours of sleep on most nights of the week. She is a runner. It doesn't matter that they just started yesterday, it's what they believe about themselves and the actions that they take. Don't let others tell you what you can't do. Author Roy T. Bennett once said, "Don't let the limitations of others limit your vision. If you can remove your self-doubt and believe in yourself, you can achieve what you never thought possible." So I say it again, you have permission.

All right. Another quote by Seth Godin, he says, "Busy is not the same as productive." The actions you take certainly require effort, but is that effort actually helping or hindering your progress? I wrote a blog post a few years ago, where I explained some of the reasons why

someone might seek the help of a trainer or a coach. I mean, fitness, nutrition, health advice and information, all of that's on the internet. You don't need me for the information, right?

Well, the conclusion I came to was that there are several ways to reach your goals, but there are fewer ways that are, number one, realistic for you, and number two, able to get you there in the most efficient way possible. So yes, you can reduce your calorie intake, for example, by 10% and maybe achieve a goal, but is that the best way for you? Or yeah, you could sleep for seven and a half hours a night, but is that what you really need? There are hundreds of solutions and you could follow just about any of them, but just because you're busy following someone else's solution, doesn't mean that you're actually producing results.

Are you in the driver's seat or are you along for the ride? There are certainly times when either of those two options can benefit you. Most of the time, I'll be honest, I like to drive. That's just kind of how I'm wired, but sometimes I enjoy the feeling of sitting down on a train or a flight, where I don't have to think about how I'm going to get to my destination, where I don't have to worry about the challenges that may pop up along the way. That's the conductor's job, or that's the pilot's job, in those cases. And when it comes to health, sometimes we think that way too. "I'll just do whatever my coach says. My trainer knows best," but my point to you here, is that sometimes we underestimate the amount of control that we actually have, in determining our own actions and our own habits, and by extension, our outcomes.

So you have a lot of control, you have more than you think. You have so much control, and I know it may seem hard, but there's a reason for that, and it's not always because it is hard, it's because the ways of reaching those healthy living goals, the ways that have been taught for years and years, they just don't serve most of us well. Mind over matter is a poor strategy when it comes to healthier living, at least if you want to maintain healthy habits, that is. It's a short term solution and it's not sustainable.

I could give a hundred other examples, and at other times, we worry about things that we actually have no control over, whether it's numbers on a scale, or any of those measurements that we just can't control. I'd hate to see you give up on your goals for a healthier life because you're using an outdated strategy. So if you're interested in being in the driver's seat when you should be, and riding along when it's appropriate, you can learn more at tdfitness.net/takeaction.

Author Henry James had the following quote. He said, "Three things in human life are important. The first is to be kind, and the second is to be kind, and the third is to be kind." I read quotes every day from a website called passiton.com, and this one was one that I read recently. I think the takeaway thought for me was that kindness starts with yourself, and that you should be mindful of what we call self-talk. I feel like it's something we need to remind ourselves of often. We know that The Good Book directs us to be kind to others, our parents have taught us that respect for others is important. Society largely believes that you can get along better in the world by being nice, and that you should treat others the way that you want to be treated.

But when it comes to how we treat ourselves, there's often a disconnect between this common belief of compassion, respect, and kindness, and in our own self-talk or what we tell ourselves. For example, how do you feel if you oversleep and you miss a workout? Do you feel guilty when you have a cupcake, maybe, despite your promise to yourself that you were going to eat healthier? So here's the deal. Life happens, right? And life is here to be lived. So yes, you should include an exercise plan in your daily life, but sometimes you're going to skip a workout, that's life. And you should generally have a healthy diet, but it's also okay to indulge time to time. That's what an indulgence is. And it's not a bad word, just don't let the

indulgences and the skipped workouts become your normal. So yes, be nice to others, but let's also be nice to ourselves. I can give you permission to deviate from time to time, but ultimately, you have to give yourself permission. Don't be your worst critic. Instead, let's try to be our strongest supporters.

We live in a world where perfection is often expected, right? Where tight tolerances win awards for safety, where precision is valued, and where exactness leads to efficiency. But here's the thing, when it comes to our health and expectations that we have for ourselves, we're not built like a watch, or a vehicle, or a microscope, we're human. And while yes, it's good to be on time, to have a schedule you follow, and exercise routine, a list of rules for yourself and so on, it's not the strict adherence to any of this that leads to healthy living success, it's actually slack in our systems that create our ability to be better and dismiss the idea of being perfect, and that's what we want.

If you're an intermittent faster, maybe five out of seven days works for you, with a couple of days maybe to account for life or breakfast with the kids. If you're a dieter, maybe a couple of cheat days every now and then allow you to be better a majority of the time, and if you're an avid runner, try throwing in a week of just focused yoga or stretching into your routine, without taking a single jog all week. You see, if there's too much tension or too much tautness, too much pulling and no give, if there's no slack in your system, your system is likely to break because again, we're not machines, we're human.

What we believe is largely influenced by our experiences. Our beliefs are built upon what we generally know to be true, and this is both good and bad. It's good because the experiences that we've endured, help us to make decisions about the future and about what to expect, based on a historical truth, if you will. I believe, for example, that I can wait until the night before my paper is due to write it, because my experience tells me that I've done it many times before, right?

But this works against us when a lack of experience becomes what we call a limiting belief. If you say, for example, "Well, I've never been successful at keeping weight off before, so I'm fairly certain this approach won't work either. My experience tells me that it hasn't worked before, and I don't believe it'll work now," just because you haven't personally experienced something, doesn't mean it can't or won't happen. Beliefs are largely what we think will happen, and yeah, it's based on the past, but beliefs can also be what we think can happen, what's possible. That's why watching our favorite sports team or watching our kids perform is so exciting, because of what can happen. We just have to remember to bring that belief of what can happen to our personal lives and our abilities as well, because your belief actually shapes your possibility. Belief makes your desired outcome more likely.

I've noticed that with most of us, there's a misalignment between our goals and our actions. Now, this probably seems obvious to you. You're probably thinking, "Yeah, I know a lot of people who want to lose weight, but they don't exercise." Well, that's not what I'm talking about, at least not completely. And for the record, if exercising is your only strategy for weight loss, then you're missing a few other key pieces of the equation.

But back to the point, alignment between goals and actions is vitally important, because there's a disconnect I see, though. Most of us strive for a winning outcome, when we should be looking for a better outcome, or at least one that is better suited to us. And here's what I mean. So, a 300 pound individual may see a goal to lose 75 or a hundred pounds, and that's certainly a winning goal. I mean, how many people are successful at losing a third of their weight? Really only a small percentage, right? But on the other hand, if that same 300 pound person set out to lose 10% of his or her body weight over a six month period of time, which is the recommended rate at which a good coach or trainer should advise, that's a better

approach. That's a way to improve your current state, and set the groundwork for a healthy lifestyle, not a drastic, unsustainable change.

The same principle applies to so many things we do in an effort to live healthier. If you're a pasta lover, for example, don't opt for a carb free diet, simply reduce the amount of simple carbs that you're currently consuming. Or does your diet have too much sugar? Well, you can try a meal or a day where you limit added sugars. Not necessarily a lifetime, at least not to start. You see, the approach you take towards your goal is just as important as the goal itself. A goal to lose a hundred pounds has a different psychological effect than a goal to lose 30 pounds. One of those seems overwhelming and the other seems doable, and it's the same mindset I take and I teach others to take with long distance racing, for example. Can you run 26 miles? Maybe not, but you can run a mile, and you can continue to add one more, and one more, and one more, and so on.

So going back to winning versus improving, the fundamental difference is who you're competing against. It's others or yourself. But remember, when it comes to health, none of us has a goal to outlive our peers, but we all seek to live longer and healthier lives ourselves. So align your goals with your actions by choosing to improve your current habits. When you do that over and over again, then 30 pounds of weight loss does eventually become a hundred pounds of weight loss, but it's a lifestyle, not a finish line that you should seek.

All right guys. There you have it, the thoughts and fit vid collections from the past month or so. I hope that this has been beneficial for you. Specifically, I hope that it helps you to put some action towards your goals. I hope that it gives you a renewed outlook as we approach the new year. Again, I wish you all a happy and blessed new year. It has been an honor and a privilege to provide you with some of my thoughts and some advice for healthier living. You all have a blessed one. Coach T, signing out.