

# February 2020 Fit Clips

This is the TD Fitness Podcast with Coach T, episode number 93.

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, welcome back to the TD Fitness Podcast. This is episode number 93 and this is Coach T with another wrap up of this month's Fit Vids. So if you didn't catch them on social media, then I've consolidated, I've grouped them all here. There's a number of different great topics for you to dive into this month and in this podcast. A number of short topics talking about your future, talking about your mindset, talking about better ways to approach contests like the Biggest Loser, talking about perfection and the types of things that we should focus on as we try to implement healthy habits in our lives. So I hope you find this useful. I hope you find it helpful. Again, this is catered to the busy individuals who are looking to implement healthy habits. So without further ado, I will cut over to this month's Fit Vids. Hope you guys enjoy!

Have you ever moved to a new job, maybe been given a new position or wondered, what am I supposed to do in this position? How am I supposed to be? How am I supposed to act? What is expected of me? I've certainly had those thoughts. I've had a number of different positions over the course of my military career. And as I think through that though, I'm often reminded of the fact that greatness is not defined as simply being better than everyone else at the thing that they're doing. Greatness is usually apparent to us because of something that someone does to stand out their uniqueness. So greatness or success stems from really being yourself. And as the saying goes, be yourself because everyone else is already taken.

So applying this to health and fitness, my message to you is this. It's that your chances of success are greater when you incorporate healthier habits into your lifestyle instead of trying to change your life to follow a certain plan. So I want you to personalize it. I want you to make it yours. I want you to improve on the things that you're already doing. That answers the question of how you should act.

I was at church last week and I heard a very powerful message. And as I often do, I like to take parts of messages like that and apply those thoughts and those concepts to healthier living. And that's one of the things that I love about good messages like that one. They're universal in the sense that they can be applied in so many different ways to positively affect our lives. So the sermon was called You In Five Years, the life you get stuck with. So already you can probably see where this is going, right? Regarding habits, one thing that I wrote down from the message was this. The ways that I let in now will become the ways that I'm set in later. And that's a reminder that the choices that we make can have some very long term implications and impacts.

Another thing I noted from that message, if we don't like what we're getting, we need to change what we're doing. So this one speaks to the fact that our actions ultimately determine the results we get from our lives. Another takeaway from that powerful message was that consistency is more important than short term intensity. And this one should sound familiar to

you because I often say that consistency over time is a better approach than perfection all the time.

And then finally, the pastor talked about compound interest, not in the monetary sense, but from a habits and results standpoint. The positive things that we do, they tend to build upon one another. And similarly, the negative things that we do tend to cause a downward spiral if they're continued. So growth and demise are both exponential. They're not linear. In fact, C.S. Lewis is quoted as saying that good and evil both increase at compound interest. That is why what we do matters. The decisions you make today matter. They may not seem like it, but even the smallest actions and choices add up to define us, to define who we are, to determine our results, and to really determine our health and our way forward. So whether we're talking spirituality or health, these principles apply. Make healthier choices today.

So here we are. It's a new year and with the turn of the calendar comes a new start for most people. And challenges are a great way to do this. I've seen a number of Biggest Loser groups and support mechanisms recently, but here's something to consider with a challenge like the Biggest Loser as you look to improve your health. So better than trying to be a biggest loser, I think is striving to be what I will call a longest streaker. And I know that may sound a little bit funny, but here's what I mean. I often say that weight loss should not be your goal, but rather it should be the byproduct of healthier living actions. Things like improved nutrition, better exercise, discipline, if you will, or starting to exercise, getting more rest.

So the biggest loser typically focuses on the instate. It focuses on your weight at the end of a challenge period. But my question to you is what happens next? Do you revert back to your old ways? I think it's better to look to get a long streak of healthy habits going. Now let me be clear. I definitely do not knock anything that gets people moving and living healthier lives, okay? And the Biggest Loser challenge can do that. We just have to focus on the right things. In this case, it's the things that actually get you to lose the weight. The habits and the actions that you take. It's not the weight loss itself.

So taking that a step further, if the longest streaker is better than the biggest loser, then I'd say better than a long streak is consistent action over time. And this is really where the magic happens because when a streak ends or if you have a misstep for example, or factors beyond your control cause you to break that streak, then you're still on track for being consistent. So a 30 day streak is great, but 50 days out of 60 is even better. So good, better, best. Short term challenges are good, healthy habits streaks are better, but consistency over time is the best approach.

What are these Fit Vids for? Are they to inform? Partially. Are they meant to inspire? Certainly, but mostly they're meant to spur action. There is an abundance of health and fitness information on the internet, in books and wherever else you look really, but information alone doesn't change us. It's putting action toward our thoughts and intentions that serve to make us better. Education without motivation and intent is okay, but it won't change anything. And intent without action doesn't change much either. So if these posts are informative, you've got the information and the education piece covered. If they inspire you, then use that as motivation. But the rest is up to you to take action.

I'm not satisfied with simply providing information. I want better for you, a healthier life for you. So these short videos or any other form of inspiration, use them to take action in your

life today. Even the smallest things matter. So start with something small and make today a little bit healthier than yesterday was.

The obvious answer isn't always the right one. In fact, the obvious answer often maximizes the short term wins while sacrificing the long-term. Stay up late to enjoy the movie, you pay for it in the morning. You spend your money on an indulgence, then you have less money to pay your debts. And of course, if you take the extreme diet road of calorie restriction or cutting out food groups, you may lose a little weight, but is that really a sustainable lifestyle over the long-term? Probably not. You'll be trying the next fad soon.

So here's something to consider. Day traders are a lot more hands on and busier than long-term investors, but I'd argue that long-term investments have a bigger impact over time. Your perspective matters. Choose the long game in health and fitness. That is what matters most.

Do you ever wonder why professional disciplines are described as practice? Doctors practice medicine, attorneys practice law. I think it's because a trait or a quality of true professionalism is having an understanding that you can never perfect it. You can never perfect your craft. You can never do it perfectly. Professional athletes, they don't simply compete, they practice a great deal as well. So why don't we embrace a practice or a learning approach more often? There isn't a whole lot more that's more important than your health, right? So I feel like we should approach it like a profession with the seriousness that comes with that. And we should understand that it's okay to practice healthy living, not necessarily feel the pressure to perfect it. That's how we get better by asking, what do I live to learn? We inevitably learn to live healthier.

So here's a quote from a gentleman named Frank Outlaw. He says, watch your thoughts for they become words, watch your words for they become actions, watch your actions for they become habits and watch your habits for they become character. Watch your character for it will become your destiny. Man, and it's so true. It all starts with our thoughts and it ends with our habits. They define who we are. What happens in between is largely up to us.

It's important to note that the reason we practice habits or get stuck in them is because they either make things easier, they make us feel better, or they're just comfortable. So break the bad habits and start better ones, right? Well, that's easier said than done. There've been a lot of books written about those two concepts alone, believe me. I know it because I've read many of them, but let me give you the CliffsNotes version here. So two things. Number one, identify the trigger of your bad habits. Yes, there is one, believe me, and try to remove that. And then number two, change little by little, not in a huge sweeping movement. Here's to living a healthier life.

John Maxwell said, improvement doesn't happen in a day but it must be daily. I really liked that quote because it speaks to the long-term outlook and the mindset that we all must have as well as the need for consistency, I'll say, in our lives. The irony here is that we know all this, right? But practicing it, practicing those daily actions that become positive habits, that's a lot more difficult. Maybe if we didn't have anything else in life to worry about or focus on, then living a healthy, consistent life would be easier, but that is not the reality. That's why we have to stress that word consistency and not focus on perfection. Did you do a little bit better today than yesterday? If so, that is a win. Did you practice that healthy habit on more days this week than not? Then that's a win. And more importantly, that is doable. Consistency and a long-term outlook are about the actions you take, but your mindset matters as well.

What makes you healthy or fit or unfit or motivated or a runner? What makes you an exercise person or a healthy eater or any other quality that others may use to describe you or what you may use to describe yourself? So here's the thing. A doctor is a doctor because they earn a degree. The person who fails the final class before graduation does not get the distinction of calling themselves a doctor. Another example, when you finish an Ironman race, the announcer says your name over the loudspeaker as you cross the finish line and then he says, "You are an Ironman." You don't call yourself an Ironman unless you cross that finish line. So what do you have to do to call yourself healthy or fit or a runner or a healthy eater or any of the other adjectives that I mentioned earlier?

There's no degree that you need to call yourself that. There is no finish line that you have to cross to say that you're healthy. I argue that all you have to do, all you have to do is decide. Yesterday, you may not have been a runner, but today you can call yourself one if you want to. All you have to do is run. Not for years, just decide today that you're a runner and start running and stay consistent. My point is this, your decision to do better, to be better is dependent on one thing, your decision. It's yours. You own it. If you want to be a healthy eater, decide to be one and you can call yourself that and then do the things that healthy eaters do. If you want to be more fit, decide to be more fit and call yourself healthy and fit and then do the things that fit people do. You are who you decide to be. Don't wait for the world's definition or anyone else's definition to call yourself what you want to be. Unless of course you want to be a doctor, you can't just call yourself that.

All right, this week's theme is that mindset matters, particularly when you're trying to improve your busy lifestyle and see some solid traction on living healthier. So here's a stat for you. 80% of the people who made a promise to themselves to lose weight and get fit at the beginning of this year, at the beginning of 2020, had failed to make any significant headway and had given up by Valentine's Day. Now, why is that?

Well, there are a number of things that go on and go into meeting your goals or not meeting them. And a lot of it varies from person to person, but in my experience, one of the single most telling factors in whether someone makes positive headway toward their goal or not is the type of goal that they set. And I'm not talking about the difficulty of the goal, I'm talking about a performance goal versus an outcome goal.

So often we seek to control outcomes. The weight loss goal is the perfect example of this because it's important to understand that there are a litany of things that determine whether or not we drop weight and if we do and how fast that change occurs. We can't directly control that outcome even though we want to, but what we can control is our performance toward that goal, toward that outcome and other goals like it.

So yes, Valentine's Day may have come and gone and you may have said, "Six weeks and I've only lost a pound. Why am I even doing this?" But if your goal was to change or improve your habits, you might have said, "Hey, I started this new year with a goal to exercise once per week and I've hit that goal five out of six times. I am proud of myself." Now, that's something you can build on. You can certainly build on that by adding more exercise to your routine or by improving a habit in the way that you eat, for example, or any other thing that is personal to you or personalized for your lifestyle. That is the basis of change and improvement, choosing performance goals and not getting discouraged by outcomes that you can't control. So here's to a great week.

All right guys, I have a confession to make and this is something that I've battled all my life, or at least for as long as I can remember, and it's this, I can be a bit of a perfectionist and here's why that's a problem, especially when it comes to health and fitness. You see, I always want to start fresh. I want to start at the beginning of the year or the beginning of the month or at the beginning of the week. And what's worse is when I know that I'm not going to have a perfect week, it's easy for me to chalk that time period up as a loss and just wait until the next opportunity for a fresh start before I give it another try. But in staying with this week's theme of having the right mindset, one of the concepts under this principle, this mindset principle, which is principle number eight of my 12 principles of living a healthier life, is that we shouldn't try to be perfect.

I often say that consistency over time is better than trying to be perfect all the time. So my advice to you is something that I often have to remind myself of and it is that the best time to start isn't Monday and it isn't on the first of the month or at the beginning of the year. The best time to start is now. Today can be the first day of you starting to live healthier and tomorrow can be the second. So to learn more about how you can apply the 12 principles of healthier living in your life, go to [tdfitness.net/takeaction](https://tdfitness.net/takeaction). You can find out more there.

All right, in continuing and really wrapping up this week's theme of mindset for busy individuals and specifically on this concept of perfection within your mindset, think about how these two statements make you feel. The statements are a little bit different. Statement number one, I will eat vegetables every day this week and statement number two, I will eat vegetables on five days this week. And you can insert whatever healthier action or healthy habit you choose into either one of those statements, whether it's eating vegetables or exercising, what have you. But the difference between those two is somewhat obvious, but it's also subtle because there are two days where you aren't challenged to eat vegetables in this example, but more important than that is the subtle distinction between perfection and planned imperfection, also known as slack.

Every system works because of some room for error and some tolerance for imperfection. Our healthy living plans are no different. So better than trying to be the perfect eater or to have a perfect week of exercise is planning to be consistent over time. Not only is that more realistic, but it's a huge difference in mindset and in expectations. If someone tells me that I have to get a 100% on a test, that's a different thought process and paradigm than me having to just get an A. There's room for error if all I have to do is get an A and not necessarily 100%. I don't feel like I have to be perfect. So if you're looking for some examples of healthier habits for busy individuals, head to [tdfitness.net](https://tdfitness.net) and download my free guide, which is 25 Healthy Habits for Busy Lifestyles, and remember that you don't have to be perfect. In fact, when we hold ourselves to that standard of trying to be perfect, sometimes we can set ourselves up for failure.

All right guys, that's it. Those are the Fit Vids from the past month, the month of February, 2020. Hopefully, again, you find all of those topics, those short tips, those Fit Vids useful. You can always check those out on social media on all the channels there, and obviously you can find more at [tdfitness.net](https://tdfitness.net). I have all of these posted there for you as well. So with that, I'm wishing you a happy and healthy month of March and I'll be back next month with more Fit Vids just for you.

Coach T, out!

