

April 2020 Fit Clips

This is The TD Fitness Podcast with Coach T, episode number 95.

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. I'm your host, Coach T. This is episode number 95, and this is a yet another collection of the past months Fit Vids. But what I'll tell you is that the Fit Vid collection from the past four weeks is a little bit different than what I typically do. Typically I will choose a topic areas that are a part of my 12 principles of living a healthier lifestyle, and specifically trying to implement habits towards each one of those principles.

But in this podcast, this collection. Because we're in this era of COVID-19 and all of the concern and so forth that is surrounding that. What I decided to do was draw on four broad areas that I think are pertinent during this time, but that also relate to our health and fitness from a longterm point of view. From a longstanding point of view or just kind of an overall parallel if you will, between some of the things that we're encountering now with COVID-19 but also that we should consider all the time as we look to live healthier lives.

So I'm going to dive into each one of those four topic areas. Those areas are information overload and how to deal with that. Also, we're going to talk about fear and how to cope with some of those things that we're dealing with right now. We'll talk about the power of connections. And then finally, just talk a little bit about perspective in the longterm view. So those are the areas that I thought were most important to hit to help us all out as we face the COVID-19 concerns, but also try our best to live our healthiest life. So here it is, episode number 95. I hope you enjoy.

Hey folks, Coach T here. I never intend for these Fit Vids or even the podcast to be a current events podcast or to address current events necessarily. I tend to focus on the long view. Because there are some things that I just feel don't change over time. Right? And this, all the situation that we have with COVID-19 and the spread of the disease, I think this is an opportunity to be reminded of the long view.

But I'll tell you what this has highlighted for me is that there are a number of things that are brought out with this short term health crisis that really apply all the time to our longterm health as well. And I'm not just talking about from a physical health standpoint, but also from a mental approach standpoint.

So what I'm going to do over the next four weeks is focus on four major themes. The first is information overload and how to deal with that. The second is fear and how to cope.

The third is the importance of connection. And the fourth is of course the short term versus the long term approach.

Now like I said, over the next four weeks, I'll plan to dive into each of those four topics. And in this week, we're going to talk about information overload. So couple of years ago, I watched a session conducted by Ashley Koff who is the registered dietician that we partner with here at TD Fitness to provide all of our nutrition and dietician information to our action takers.

And her session was on infobesity, if you will. And I thought that was such an appropriate title, infobesity and your health. And what it talked about was that we are inundated with so much health and fitness information. And a lot of times it leads to confusion. I mean, there are a number of things that are wrong with that. There's so much health information on what to do out there. So I want to talk just a little bit about how to cope with that.

So the first thing I'd tell you is that we have to be smart about what we choose to believe, and what we even choose to give our attention to. The second thing I'll tell you is that we need to filter down what we will listen to or follow. And a lot of times that's got to be based on trust, right? Because if you have a relationship with, for example, with TD Fitness. Hopefully there's a level of trust here and that you believe what I'm saying and that I have your best interests in mind.

And then finally, think about what's important to you. Because if you're open to any information source, then your views are going to be shaped. But if you know what you're interested in, then you learn more about the things that are important to you. And an example that comes to mind here, just a simple example. If you go to the grocery store without a grocery list, you're more apt to buy a number of things that you maybe didn't need at that time. But if you go to the store with a grocery list, then you're probably going to come out with exactly what you intended to get. So let's talk a little bit about the COVID-19 as an example and then I want to talk about longterm health.

So I am not watching the news. Okay, I'll tell you that straight up. It's just too much information. I'm not sure of the slants all the time. So that's how I narrow down what's coming in. I get my information through my work actually. I trust those information sources. For some of you, it may be social media. You could follow the CDC or Johns Hopkins University or others that are providing some no kidding good information on all things COVID related.

The second thing, when I think about what's important to me throughout all of this, our fitness. And I say our fitness intentionally because I'm talking about your fitness, my fitness, and my family's fitness. And that is why I continue to provide the free weekly workouts during this time. Those are the workouts that are typically reserved just for my action takers, my monthly members. But I've decided to open those up and provide those. Those are the workouts that you can do without any gym. So that's one of the reasons also why my family and I are staying focused on exercise and an outdoor activity. So that's just kind of how I'm approaching the things that are important to me and narrowing down information through all of this COVID-19 chatter.

When it comes to longterm health and fitness though, going back to the first point, to be smart about it. If it sounds too good to be true, then it probably is. For example, you're not going to lose 20 pounds in a month, not safely anyway. So use common sense and don't be fooled through appealing advertising or the gift gap. If you do have questions, you can always reach out to me at TD Fitness.

Second, if health and fitness information isn't coming from a source that you trust to provide health and fitness, consider that. There are a lot of folks out there that are putting out health and fitness related information, and it's just not in their wheelhouse. Okay?

And then the final thing I'll leave you with is think about what's important to you. You don't necessarily need a diet plan, for example, just because someone is selling it. So think about the areas of your life you could use help in and start there. Okay? So again, just to recap, going back I want you to be smart. I want you to narrow down the information that you choose to follow and choose to trust. And then remember what's important to you and try to look for information that is related to those things. So that's it. As a reminder, those workouts are hung on tdfitness.net. I encourage you to go take a look. Have a good week. Coach T.

Hey guys, Coach T here. So staying with this theme of information overload. One of the downsides of having all this information when it comes to health and fitness is that we don't know who to believe. So let me give you just a couple of my thoughts on that. So the first thing I think we should slew our attention to is someone who is trained and qualified. Not just popular and not just because they already have your attention. For example, you may trust me because of my personal trainer and health coach qualifications or my experience, but that doesn't necessarily make me qualified to give you advice on what vacuum cleaner to buy, right? I'm not qualified to do that. So look for expertise in the field that you're interested in.

The second thing I'd offer is that we should look for those who have our best interests in mind. And this is really a tricky one, because it can sometimes be hard to identify those people or those things. But it goes closely with my third point here, and that is deciding who you trust. Okay? Life experience has taught most of us to trust our gut. And if it seems a little odd, then it probably is a little odd. So you have to trust your own judgment on that. And if you're unsure, ask someone. Ask someone you do trust. As you decide who to believe and who to give your valuable attention to, again, consider qualifications and experience. Consider whether or not you feel they have your best interests in mind, and whether you trust them.

All right. Staying with this theme of information overload, as we wrap up this week. The third thing that information overload causes is confusion, and really distraction from what we should be focused on.

So my daughters love magic. They like it when I make things disappear and reappear. I'm not that good at it in all honesty, but I don't really have to be because our girls are young. And I know that no matter how intently the focus on what may or may not be in my hand for example, that there will be a moment when they are momentarily distracted and I can make the magic work, right?

So at a higher level of expertise, if you will, this is how many professional magicians perform the slight of hand tricks, by controlling where your attention is and where it is at any given moment.

So the thing with attention is that we only have so much of it. And it can only be focused on one thing at a time. And that's why we use that word, actually the word focus. Because only one thing is clear to us at that moment.

So confusion that comes from information overload, whether it's COVID-19 news or from the numerous follow this diet and use this exercise machine sources. That confusion is a result of too many things competing for our attention. And that equals distraction, and it's distraction from what's really important. Just because unlimited sources of information exist, does not mean that you have to follow them all. Your attention, your time is valuable. So let's treat it that way. I certainly appreciate your time and your attention. If you feel that others may benefit from this post, then I'd ask you to share it. Thanks.

So here we are in week two of this four week video series. And while I'm still talking about things along the lines of health and fitness, I think this is a unique time for us with the coronavirus really reminding us of some things that are eternal. So last week, I talked about information overload. I mean there's information about the Corona virus everywhere. I think that's similar to normal times when there is health and fitness information that we're inundated with and we really don't know what to do with or how to deal with it. So this week, I'd like to talk about fear and how to cope with that fear.

So as I think about how to thrive through fear, there's obviously this fear of the disease, right? But I'd like to talk a little bit about the fear of the unknown. The fear of having to do life differently. The fear maybe of having to teach your kids yourself at home. The fear of having to occupy your children all day. The fear of not having your normal workout partners or your exercise class anymore. The fear of losing the progress maybe that you've made in health and fitness up to this point. And the fear of not trusting yourself. Not trusting yourself to avoid those healthier snacks that are in the house with you all day, and not trusting yourself to be disciplined enough to exercise on your own. Those are the types of fears that I'm talking about.

And those fears, I understand they can be crippling and they prevent us. They prevent us from starting things many times. We get comfortable with the normal routine. Even if it's not necessarily the best routine for us, we tend to be creatures of habit. And that fear can prevent us from starting new things that create a new way of life that can be better for us. And that fear can also prevent us from continuing things. Our normal lives, for example. But these fears, they can be overcome. Life's daily fears, those little ones that add up to cause stress, to cause anxiety and to make us feel anxious and make us feel uncertain. They can be overcome.

So if I were to offer a thought on those types of fears, it would be this. We are where we are, we have to face it. That's the current situation. We have to accept that. And the truth of the matter is we may be here for a while. But the good news is that there is a way forward that is absolutely doable.

People talk about courage in the face of fear. I'd remind you that courage isn't the absence of fear, but it's pressing forward through the fears that you feel. And that is a choice. It could be an uncomfortable one, but it's a choice nonetheless. And it's your choice. So keep that perspective. You may not think you can press through, but I absolutely do. I think you can. I believe in you. I want you to know that your fears are normal. We all have them. But your opportunity and your ability on the other hand, those are things that are unique to you. Only you can turn your situation and your fears about that situation into a positive. Believe and do.

So in the last video, I talked about fear and how it can prevent us from starting, from doing things. So I'd like to talk a little bit here about fear and withdrawal.

So yes, fear prevents us from starting things that could benefit us. And certainly I encourage you to embrace that fear and to overcome it. But I'd like to point out another caution about fear. And that is that fear sometimes causes us to withdraw. Which is similar to not starting, but I'm talking about the effects of fear on a broader scale within our own lives.

For example, we're shut out from our normal gym or exercise class routine. And we're scared to begin a routine on our own at home. For one reason or another, there could be many. But that fear creates a state of mind that goes beyond exercise. That fear can spread within us. Kind of like a virus actually. And it can prevent us from doing other things, other positive, healthy things in our lives. And we start to look for the, what I call the why we can'ts. And guess what? We find those. "I guess I can't exercise like I want to. And it's such a burden to go to the grocery store right now, and I can't eat healthy at my favorite salad place." So you can see where that goes. Right?

But what I'd offer here is the and versus but approach to counter that. And here's what I mean. So two different statements here. I wanted to exercise, but the gym is closed. Now that statement's somewhat final. But if you say I wanted to exercise and the gym is closed, that leaves an opening for something else. For a, "So I guess I'll just do what I can at home," type of mentality.

So more important than the word of but versus and here is really the mindset that I'm talking about. When we think we can overcome a challenge, we can absolutely overcome a challenge. And the opposite is also true. Ben Franklin said it. "Whether you think you can or you can't, you're absolutely right." So don't let your fears in one area of self-improvement cause complete withdrawal and prevent you from taking action in other areas.

We're all in this together. Why is that such a powerful statement, and why is it so comforting? I mean, if you had to be lost in the wilderness, would you rather be alone or would you rather be in a group? If you had to deal with the fear and uncertainty of a disease like the coronavirus and not knowing whether or not it was going to affect you, would you rather be in that situation alone or would you rather be with people who share the same concerns?

When we're in this together, it allows us to share the burden. And it comforts us because we know that we're not the only one. And at times, we can work together to solve

whatever that problem might be. So as I wrap up this week's discussion on fear, it's worth noting that we are rarely alone. Even though sometimes it may seem like we are. Whether it's the fear of starting something new, a new routine like I talked about earlier in the week. Or if it's the fear that comes from the uncertainty of the coronavirus and how that will change things, we are truly all in this together. And there is certainly comfort in knowing that.

What makes all of this easier is that we're in the same boat. So this uncertain time and situation may cause a little bit of fear, but take comfort in knowing that everyone is going through many of those same challenges that you are. Sometimes just knowing is enough to quell a little bit of that anxiousness.

Hey guys, this is week three of a four week series that I'm doing during the month of April where I just kind of pick out some of the similarities of things that we're dealing with, with this recent coronavirus situation and some parallels frankly to just normal everyday life and some of the challenges that we deal with in our own quest and desires for better health and fitness.

So weeks one and two, the first week I talked about information overload and how we deal with that or how we can deal with that. Last week we talked about fear and how to cope. And this week, I want talk about the importance of connection.

So we need connection. We need social interaction in our lives. It helps us to cope, whether it's with the coronavirus or with health improvement, or fitness or nutrition. That's part of the irony here and why I think these times are particularly difficult for us, because we're enduring a national crisis. And we're doing that while one of our primary ways of coping with things like this has essentially been taken away from us. And that is the ability to work through a challenge like this together in a connected manner. And I don't think it's really been evident to us that the reason why this is so difficult and scary is because we aren't able to handle it through connection like we normally would be able to.

I mentioned earlier this month that we're enduring two crises here. One is the coronavirus itself and the second is this viral fear that is associated with it. And I think I'd add a third crisis now, and that is the problem of forced solitude. Of standing in the corner if you will, being put in timeout. Those disciplinary tools are effective for our children because the punishment of momentary or temporary seclusion or exclusion from your peers is hard to deal with. And that's essentially where we are now as adults. And it's difficult. It's still difficult. And just like kids don't always appreciate things until those very things are taken away. Now we have a greater appreciation for connection in our lives. We need connection. It's natural and it helps us to cope. It helps us to deal with challenges, whether that challenge is a national crisis or personal health and fitness habit. But connection and simply being connected are not the same thing. Just like social media and social interaction are not the same things. But I'll talk more about that in the next video.

Okay. In the last video, I mentioned that being connected is not the same as connection. And social media is not the same as social interaction. So I'd like to briefly talk about what I'll call three different levels of connection.

So first there is connectedness, I'll call it or being connected. And then there's actual connection. And then maybe contact would be the third category. So connectedness or being connected, that's essentially what we've become accustomed to. I mean pre COVID-19. Largely through social media. And before that it was email. Before that maybe cell phones and the internet. Before that, even the invention of the TV and radio, and landline phones were ways that we use to, mechanisms that we use to stay connected. Even letter writing if anyone remembers that. So those are all mediums of connectedness.

But connection is different. It's more. That's essentially what we long for now because it's being restricted and it's limited. And it's being limited with stay at home orders, with closures of restaurants, churches, movie theaters, bars. I talked about that in the last video.

And that close contact, that third level with others. And these days, if it's not your family, then good luck because you're not having contact really with anyone else.

So one of the things that this coronavirus situation has highlighted is the need for real connection and contact. And maybe we needed to be reminded of that. Even those of us who are introverts, we all need connection to make us better in health and in life. And particularly in times of crisis. Isolation and insulation are not the best longterm strategy. So in a time where we can't necessarily connect through contact, let's continue to connect as best we can through these digital means of connectedness because it is the next best thing.

So in the last couple of videos, I talked about how connection is better than merely being connected. But I'll also point out that there is benefit in being connected as well. Especially when there's a problem to be solved or when we need help. The network effect of everyone working together to for example, prevent the spread of disease to work on a cure for COVID-19 and to take care of the greater masses. That network effect is powerful, and it's powerful because of a simple truth. And that is that all of us are more capable than any of us. All of us together are more capable than any one of us alone. And that is where connectedness has value.

In the current situation that we're all facing, as well as in our goals for personal growth in fitness, in nutrition, in health, and in life. We can solve these problems together.

All right. So here we are in week four, still talking about health and fitness and some of the parallels between this unique time, if you will, of the coronavirus and things that we're dealing with. Because I think that there are some eternal truths that can come out of our present situation and things that we can be reminded of.

So in the first week, we talked about information overload and how to deal with that. And then we hit fear and how to cope. And then last week we talked about the importance of connection. And this week, I want to address perspective. And really the short term and the longterm outlook. So that's the theme this week is the power of perspective.

So it's easy to get caught up in the short term. But the farther out your view, the greater your perspective. I remember when I was very young, my dad would get the paper every day. And on Sundays, the newspaper had a magazine called Parade Magazine in it.

Sometimes in that magazine there were some games you could do. And one of those things that I remember was pictures of very close in objects.

So the point of the game was to kind of try to guess what you were looking at, and you had to do that without having the benefit of perspective. Those pictures lacked perspective. They were really zoomed in shots. So they lacked perspective and context.

And the thing that I remember from that is that, or the takeaway I guess is that you were more aware with context and perspective. So my point here is to think about the context and to look at things with a broader perspective. Especially during these difficult times, but then even beyond these COVID times as well. Think about the time when the COVID-19 crisis of 2020 is in the rear view mirror. Because if you don't think about that and how things will be different, then you'll be just as caught off guard as you were when the crisis hit. This too shall pass. But in order to be ready for it and to thrive post COVID, you have to have perspective.

So what does that look like from a health and fitness standpoint? Well, it's realizing that the time we're in is temporary. But some of the effects on society, on our way of life, on businesses. And even on our outlook and yes, on our perspective, some of those things will be changed permanently. So work to engrain or maintain healthy habits now. Believe me, they will pay off in the long run. It's about your longterm health. It always is and it always has been. And that perspective is key.

So here's a reality. And that is that perspective is hard when there is uncertainty. It's hard when the end is unknown, when you don't know when the difficult time will end or when you don't know what the outcome will be. Whether it will be favorable or not.

Immediately after September 11th 2001 I, along with many others deployed as part of our military forces in response to the terror attacks. And since then, I've done a number of other deployments. But I'll tell you that that first one was probably one of the hardest ones. And it was hard because we left home with no planned return date. So we were living day to day in a deployed environment with a lot of unknowns, without any idea how long we were going to be there.

And I think about that as I think about the time we're living in right now. That first deployment for me, we're in an uncertain situation and we aren't sure how long it will last. And with those two variables, it's hard to have comfort and to trust when things are seemingly beyond your control. But that's why I go back to perspective. Because even though there's uncertainty right now, I can say with a fair amount of certainty that this will not last forever. So keep that perspective. The parallel to healthy living and healthy habits. Well, it's hard to stay committed and to make sacrifices for healthy habits when you don't know if it'll work. Especially when you don't know how long it'll take to see results. So just like it's hard to stay in a relationship if you don't know where it's going. Right? Well, when we're in uncertain times or we can't see the end in sight, we tend to get uneasy and our inhibitions are lowered. So again, keep the right perspective and know that you will see an end to the tough times. Even if you don't know yet exactly when that's going to be.

The greater your perspective, the better your ability to cope. These times are tough. But for every individual who is feeling beat down and defeated or frustrated by the current situation, there's someone who's thriving, who is seeking a new opportunity, finding new opportunities, taking advantage of things that our previous old lives pre-COVID didn't necessarily allow for. And the reason that those people are able to do that, it's because of their perspective, because of their outlook, and maybe because of a decision to shift their perspective.

People are finding opportunity in this adversity. Whether it's through online classes or renewed friendships, or maybe reprioritizing your family, reshuffling priorities. Life has a way of resetting us when we forget to or neglect to reset ourselves. It's kind of like how an injury makes us pause. Especially when we need to.

And you have the power to shift your perspective as well because you are able to choose how you will react to or handle a given situation. And how to handle this situation. And that power lies in your perspective. That is the most important thing.

There are innovators. There are those who are going to innovate, and there are those who will not or don't innovate. So how will you come out of this? If you practiced healthy living before all of this, then it's likely that you're continuing to practice those healthy habits now. And if you're practicing healthy habits now, then you're likely to continue with that way of life in the future. And if you're trying to start something new, then this is a great time to do that. This new normal may serve you well to set some positive habits in your life. So take advantage. Take advantage of these unique times and stay the course. But again, you have to decide and you have to have the right perspective.

Okay. There you have it folks. That is the latest collection of Fit Vids. Hopefully you found that useful. As I said, I think there are a lot of things that we can learn from what we've highlighted, what we've endured at least over the last month with the COVID-19 crisis. I think there's a lot that we can take away from that and also apply to our lives in a broader perspective as we continue to try to live as healthy as we can. So thanks for joining me. Thanks for tuning in. If you like this content, please subscribe. Like it on iTunes and share it. I love when you all share the content that I put out. I also love to get your questions, so I encourage you to continue to hit me up with questions. Certainly appreciate it. Look forward to answering the things that are on your mind. So thanks again for tuning in. This is episode number 95, and I'll be back next month with more content for you to live a healthier life.

Coach T signing out.