

# August 2020 Fit Clips

This is the TD Fitness Podcast with Coach T, episode number 99.

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, what's up guys, Coach T here. Welcome back to the TD Fitness Podcast. This is episode number 99. Seems kind of crazy, but hey, do have some info for you in this episode. This is another one of my Fit vid recaps. So I am pleased to bring you the information and some of the themes that we talked about over the last several weeks when it comes to living a healthier life. So really the things that we focused on over the last few weeks with respect to the Fit vids are the final four themes in my 12 principles for healthier living. The first theme was thinking about the things that can work against you. So I have a clip here from a few weeks ago where we talked about your route to healthier. Okay? And what I mean by that is what can work against you in your journey for healthier living?

What are some things that have slowed you down, maybe some speed traps? Try to think about those things and then remove or avoid those obstacles so that you can travel the best route to your destination of a healthier lifestyle. We also talked about choosing possible different approaches, right? Because there are times when we make the same mistakes over and over again. And if you make those mistakes, or if you find that what you repeatedly do is ineffective, then don't keep going down that road, and don't fall for that same trap. Then we talked about reframing the time obstacle. And really the point here is about how we don't really manage our time. Time is fixed, we have the same amount of it each day. But what we can do is determine how we're going to use our time and more importantly, how we're going to prioritize within the amount of time that we're given.

So that was the first theme. The second was thinking about what can work for you in your journey on a healthier lifestyle. And one of the things I pointed out was that your environment matters. That's extremely important. Another is that your support system matters. And then finally, accountability. Accountability is going to be so important. So those are some of the things that can work in your favor, things that can work for you. The next theme we hit over the last couple of weeks was measuring the right things. And I did a bit on whether or not we should count calories, and what does it mean, what's the real point of that, and maybe a better approach to take with counting calories and tracking your intake

and those types of things. And all calories are not created equal. So those are some of the things that we talked about over that week with the theme of measuring the right things.

And then the final theme here in this episode is going to be assessing or reassessing where you are and adjusting your approach going forward. Are you making progress? If so, how can you keep making progress? If you didn't make the progress or meet the goals that you had hoped for, then what are some things that you can change? Should you stay the course, or should you look for a possibly a different avenue to continue down the road of living healthier? And then finally, something I think that is extremely important and that's actually defining what healthier means to you. Thinking about the things that are important to you and thinking about the things that you need to do to reach your goals and to get to where you want to be. So that's a broad brush overview of some of the things that we hit in this episode. With that, I'll get right to it and get into the content. Hopefully this is something that is beneficial to you and something that resonates. All right, Coach T, here we go.

If you wanted to take a trip to visit family a few states away, how would you go about that? Would you just start driving or walking? Of course not, right? Even if you're more of a fly by the seat of your pants type of person, you'd still do a little bit of planning to figure things out. You'd think about what to pack, whether driving versus walking versus hitchhiking versus flying or train or a bus is a better move. And if you drive, you think about the route you need to take, or at least put the destination in the GPS where it would tell you the best route. And what does that route take into consideration? Well, it accounts for things like accidents or slowdowns and traffic, it accounts for road closures, maybe tolls, maybe even speed traps.

It gives you an idea of the things that can make your journey less enjoyable or longer or things that can prevent you from reaching your destination. It makes you aware of the obstacles. The theme this week is what can work against you in your journey to healthier living. What are things that can, or that have slowed you down in your journey? What speed traps await you? Well, if you've taken this trip before, and most of us have, you already know some of the things that serve to work against you. This week, I challenge you to remember those things, think about them. Remove or avoid those obstacles so you can travel the best route to your destination of a healthier lifestyle.

So as we think about these things, what can work against us? Well, we have to be aware of what hasn't worked for us before, and really just don't go down that road again. I mean, that seems like common sense, but at times, we repeatedly make the same mistakes. We get stuck in our ways because we're creatures of habit. We try things, the same things, either repackage or wrapped in a different gift wrapping or painted a different color, and expect different results from what is fundamentally the same approach.

How many diets have you tried? How many different approaches to eating have you tried? Just a few days ago, I posted the following on the TD Fitness Facebook page. It's by an author named Dr. David Katz and his post, or the article, was entitled, We Already Know the Best Diet for Humans. And here's what he says. Where humans practice any reasonable variant on the theme of wholesome foods, mostly plants, in a balanced time honored assembly, wherever they eat mostly vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, lentils, nuts, and seeds, and drink mostly water, they tend to live long, prosper with vitality and go late and gentle into that good night. So the takeaway, don't keep making the same mistakes over and over again. If you make mistakes or if you find that what you repeatedly do is not effective, then don't keep going down that road and don't fall for the same approach disguised as something different. Stick with healthier habits for healthier living.

I want you to think back to the last time that you made an attempt at improving your health, either through exercise and fitness or nutrition habits, or maybe by trying to kick a not so healthy habit. What prevented you from continuing in that effort? I can tell you that personally, a number of obstacles to healthy living come to mind. Unpredictability in my schedule from time to time, usually due to work. I have competing priorities with work such as being a husband and a father. So for me, maybe for most of us, when it comes to identifying obstacles to healthier living and to avoiding or overcoming those obstacles, it really boils down to time management. But here's the thing. We can't really manage time, it's fixed. We the same amount each day. We can manage our actions. We can set, define or refine our priorities, and we can be more diligent in sticking to timelines.

So ask yourself, the next time you think about being strapped for time, what can you prioritize? What can you decide not to do? Can you be more disciplined? What can you remove from your schedule? What can you combine? Don't try to manage time, manage your actions instead. Consider these approaches as you seek to navigate and overcome the obstacle of too little time.

So here I am, on the water, it's early morning and I love this type of environment. I love seeing the sunrise. I love the quietness of the early morning. And as we work towards or work through our healthy habits for healthier living, the next one in the framework is thinking about what can work in your favor and setting yourself up for success. And the first thing that comes to mind when I think about setting yourself up for success is your environment.

James Clear, the author of Atomic Habits, said that we don't rise to the level our goals, we fall to the level of our systems. So there are a number of things that I and my wife have implemented or added to our lifestyles to be a part of our healthier living system. For example, I keep a bottle of water on my nightstand because I know that as soon as I wake up,

I need to start the rehydration process. It makes my body function better, it makes me feel better. Another example, I have a sweet tooth, so we just don't keep a lot of sweets and junk food in the house, because if it's there, I'll eat it. We control our environment. Same thing with snacks at work. Really all I keep there are some almonds and obviously water. I keep a bottle of water at work, I keep it filled most of the day.

And I can keep track of my water intake. I have the benefit of having a standup work desk. So that's another part of my environment that I can control. I can stand and do work most of the day versus sitting down. We have smaller dinner plates. That'll help us control our portion sizes. And then when we go to the store, we buy primarily fruits and vegetables. We spend most of our time in the produce section. So all of these things, we didn't implement all of these things at once. All of these things were implemented gradually over time and they have become a part of our system, they've become a part of our environment. So as you think about what can work in your favor and setting yourself up for success, realize that your environment and your surroundings need to be set up so that they're conducive to helping you with your habits and goals. Your environment is so important. So make your environment work for you.

Continuing with this week's theme of what can work in your favor and setting yourself up for success, one of the things that is very important is your support system. So my wife has been more consistent at running over the past, I'd say three months, than she ever has been. And she wouldn't call herself a runner, but she runs consistently now. And the reason is because she is part of a running group with a couple of ladies in our neighborhood.

So it's really good for them because it's their time, it's time for her to get away from the kids for a little bit, to get out with friends, to get some exercise, to decompress. They do it most mornings. So that is certainly a part of her support system, her running group. And then my wife and I also encourage one another. If I can give her time to exercise, then I want to do that. And she encourages me to, for example, ride my bike on the weekends. She knows that that's something that I like to do. So we promote one another. We add to each other's support system. And as I think about, in the military, we are surrounded largely by those who value exercise and the importance of living healthy. And I compare that with other places that I've seen, other places that I've lived, other groups that I've been around, that don't value that.

So as we think about this, it's important to understand, it's been said that you're the sum of your 10 closest friends. And I would certainly say that you are a byproduct or you're a product of the people closest to you. You probably share a lot of their beliefs, you probably share a lot of their habits as well. So your support system is important. Think about that in

that context, as you think about what can work in your favor as you look to implement and maintain healthy habits in your life. Think about your support system. Who do you surround yourself with?

Okay, wrapping up this theme of what can work in our favor as we look to live healthier, the final thing that comes to mind, although it's so important, is really accountability. And in the last segment we talked about having a partner as part of a support system, someone who's there to encourage you. But another name for that actually is an accountability partner. And there are a number of ways to hold yourself accountable. I think about our Action-Taker Academy, those TD Fitness monthly members who track their habits every day, they track the things, those one or two things, that they understand that they need to work on over the next couple of weeks.

And that is a form of accountability because I am in contact with those action takers to check in on them. I can see how they're doing with their habits. So that is one way to do it.

Having an accountability partner is another way to maintain accountability. There are a number of phone apps that help you with maintaining habits. You can do it via a lot of smartwatches. But really just knowing that someone or something is looking, right? What do you do when no one's watching? Most of us don't do anything. That's why having someone or something to monitor you is key, it's feedback. And if you want to increase your chance of success, incorporate some form of accountability into your system. Track it, use an accountability partner, become a monthly member, become an action-taker. Any of those things, anything that can help hold you accountable, because accountability is certainly a key to success when it comes to living healthier and doing those things day in and day out that lead to a healthier lifestyle.

Hey, what's up guys? The theme this week is on another one of my healthy living principles and it's measuring the right things. So a few months ago, I addressed the numbers on the scale, if you will, and I talked about how or where your weight should fit into your overall calculus of healthier living. That post was titled, the Scale of Half-Truths. You can find it, along with a couple of other posts related to that topic, back in the mid-March 2020 feed at TDFitness.net, or by searching for the title, Scale of Half-Truths, on TDFitness.net.

But today I'd like to provide some perspective on calorie counting through the lens of measuring what's important or not and how we, as busy individuals, may want to consider thinking about this. When it comes to the healthy living principle of measuring the right things, it's important to understand that what we measure is important because it informs what we think about ourselves and our ability to continue to progress along whatever journey

we're on. Measurement is feedback, because it does help us determine what we need to change going forward.

And many of us perceive measurements as validation, if you will, of ourselves and our ability to succeed. And I'll say that while calorie counting may work for some, for many busy individuals trying to live healthier, perhaps like yourself, counting calories can be hard to sustain or maintain. So my advice to you would be to measure intake, yes. But don't make it difficult or cumbersome. Now, to be fair, I have counted calories before, but only for short periods of time. And what it provided was insight into where I stood with my current dietary habits. So if you're going to count calories, do it possibly to assess how you're eating, rather than using this approach to determine what to eat. So how do you know then what to eat? Well, I'll hit that in my next segment.

So another thing that I like to point out when it comes to measuring what's important is to measure performance, not outcomes. And by performance, I mean the things that you actually have control over, because those are the things that can change, right? The classic example is measuring the actions you take toward your healthier living, which is your performance versus a number on a scale. That's an outcome that you can't necessarily control because of all the other variables involved in weight. So if counting calories is an action that you sought to take as a busy individual looking to live healthier and follow my healthy living principles, then I would encourage you to make it simpler. Counting calories is a way of measuring intake, but it's cumbersome. And I don't believe it's a sustainable longterm solution. But measuring intake is important. So why not ask what types of eating habits actually lead to lower calorie intakes?

Well, that's a question that hopefully most of us know the answer to as part of the TD Fitness family. It's consuming things like whole foods, vegetables, fruits, non-preservative foods. So this is a better way to measure your intake by adding healthier items, versus keeping track of the numbers of calories and everything. What types of actions or habits do I recommend measuring then? Well, depending on where you are on your healthier living journey, how about tracking how many days of the week you add a serving of veggies to your intake, or how many times you made at least half of your intake come from whole foods or non-processed foods. This is not only easier to measure than calorie tracking and easier approaches are especially important for us busy folks trying to maintain or manage sustainable longterm healthier solutions. But it also keeps us focused on the right things, one of which is the quality of the foods that we're consuming, not just how many calories we're putting into our bodies.

So again, the theme in this segment is measuring the right things. And one pitfall to counting calories, as a measurement of progress, is that all calories are not created equal. So two quick scenarios. One person consumes 2000 calories that consists primarily of candies, dessert and unhealthy fats. And another consumed balanced meals with healthier foods, such as lean meats, fruits, vegetables, and also comes in at 2000 calories total. So who's better off? We all know the answer to this somewhat extreme example right? Now, what I'm not saying is to relegate yourself to a no fat, no sugar diet. But what I am saying is that calorie counting alone paints an incomplete picture of the true progress that we seek to make. So don't be fooled by a lower daily calorie count that has you consuming processed foods and playing the starvation game to keep your numbers low. This is not progress. In fact, it's painful. You're better served by spending that energy looking for ways to make your current habits healthier and by taking small steps to get a little better each day. Thanks for listening.

So the final step in my principles for healthier living is to assess, adjust, and iterate. And what I mean by that is that you need to assess where you are and possibly adjust your approach, and then continue to iterate through this process to use what you've learned. So look at what you've done. Did it work? Were you successful in meeting your goal? Did you make progress? Asking the right questions is extremely important here. And the best question to ask is, "Are your habits better than they were before?" Because if they are then healthier, life will follow. But it's compare yourself to yourself and not to some standard that society has. Better actions and better habits are the goals. Perfection is not the goal. So ask the right questions of yourself and your performance as you assess how you're doing and as you assess whether what you're doing is working.

So when you question or look to improve what you're doing toward a healthier lifestyle, it's important to consider your progress and refine your approach. Will you use the success that you made in one habit or area of your lifestyle and move on to another area that needs improvement? This is what I call broadening your healthier living approach. Or, will you go deeper in your current habits? So some examples here would be to maybe take the momentum and the positive attitude from your success in adding more servings of vegetables to your diet each week, and then apply that approach to adding more exercise to your lifestyle. That's a broadening benefit of healthier habits. And you can see how this can be beneficial in making your overall lifestyle healthier.

But another example, where you would go deeper, would be to continue with the added veggies and then look to incorporate even more plant-based foods into your diet to make the majority of what you eat come from natural or unprocessed foods. This is also a great way to improve your health, by going deeper in a habit that you're having success in

already. So look at your progress and what didn't work as well, and determine whether you need to stay with the same habits or to make gains in other areas that are important for healthier living.

So the final portion of this assess, adjust and iterate step in my principles for healthier living is to really think about what progress means. There are times, many times, when we decide to give up on trying to live healthier because we feel or assess that what we're doing just isn't working or because it's too hard to maintain. But it's important to remember that the action, your attempts at healthier living, that's the real goal because your habits make you healthier. It's not necessarily the amount of weight that you've lost. If you tried for six weeks to make progress by exercising more, or by making your diet a little bit healthier, or by getting more rest to reduce the amount of stress in your life, but you're not seeing results, believe me, there are results. You're just not seeing them. Our body's timeline for what you and I would call visual feedback doesn't necessarily always match the timeline expectations that we have. So my simple message to you, don't give up. What you do makes you healthier even before how you look has time to catch up. Thanks for listening.

All right folks, there you have it. Those are the recaps from the Fit vids for the previous few weeks. Again, hopefully it's something that is useful for you. Hopefully it's something that you can refer back to. Hopefully it's something that you can glean something from and most importantly, take and apply to your life. With that, you all have a blessed day, have a blessed week. I'll be back in the next episode, episode number 100. I'm extremely excited about that and I have something special planned for you.

So here it is, Coach T, signing out.