

Reduce Stress. Live Healthier. Part 4

This is the TD Fitness Podcast with Coach T, Episode Number 104.

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 104 and it is also Part Four of our Reduce Stress and Live Healthier series and really what I'm doing in this episode is writing a couple of themes, the last two principles of my principles for healthier living, the first being to measure the right things. And then the final principle being to assess, adjust, and iterate with your approach and your performance up to these points.

So there are six Fit Vid's that I've compiled to create this episode and the first along the lines of measuring the right things, talks about how we need to measure toward a goal and really think about what's really important for a healthy, fulfilling life and understand that it may not be determined by how much you do, but rather by the quality of time that you spend on certain actions and activities.

Then the second is, it's called Measure More of a Less for Lower Stress. And really the message there is that simply being busy, although that's something that's easy to measure, that's not necessarily a good way to determine productivity and it's certainly not a good way to improve your health. So, I encourage you to view your success as the amount of additional time you can spend in those productive things like movement, rest, reflection, white space, and quality time with those that you love.

Then the final Fit Vid for the measuring the right things theme, really gets to this notion of what we measure affects us, how it affects us. And the reason why measuring these things with the right perspective in mind is important is because what we measure actually informs our view of whether we are succeeding or failing because we keep an internal clock, or a score, in our minds and how we do affects how we think about ourselves and our ability to continue on that journey. It affects our motivation.

So then the final, as I said, the final principle for healthier living as we assess, adjust and iterate, the few Fit Vid's that did under that theme, the first was titled A Better You, and when it comes to assessing your performance, really you have to have a measure of performance. So my advice in that portion is to measure against what I call your yesterday self, because it's about improving and being better today than you were yesterday.

Then I talk about two approaches to better habits, either going deeper in a specific habit or growing broader and expanding the number of habits, healthier habits, that you're incorporating.

Then the final Fit Vid that you'll hear is, it talks about lapses and lapses are essentially gaps in consistency but I talk about how we can take control of these things, because there will be gaps in consistency over time. That's just a part of life, but the key is to be more consistent than not. And when you plan for those gaps, there's less chance that you will actually have a gap or a lapse take place. Okay? So those are the six Fit Vid's that I've wrapped up into these final two principles of healthier living and to wrap up Part Four of this Reducing Stress to Live Healthier Series.

So with that, I'll let you listen to the Fit Vid's and I appreciate your time and attention. Hopefully there's something here that you can apply in your daily lives to live a healthier life, through a less stressful life.

What do you measure when it comes to your time? Is it how productive you are with your busy schedule or maybe how much you got done? Or that you were able to make all of the activities on your calendar for the day or for the week? What is success as you see it? Is it a week full of checking all the boxes?

Well, my next question for you is then what? Do we just do it again the next day or the next week? Well, most of us do. But do you actually feel better? Are you less stressed? Maybe there's some satisfaction in following through with all of the things that you said you would do, but at what cost?

You see, it's easy to measure our actions and what we do or don't do, but it's harder to measure how we feel, our level of stress or unhappiness. So how should we approach this, knowing that the important things like stress levels are what we need to measure, how do we actually do that? It's hard, if not impossible. You need something tangible to measure. So I'll

provide a recommendation in my next post, but I want you to think about what's really important for a healthy, fulfilling life and here's a hint. It may not be determined by how much you do, but rather by the quality of time you spend on certain actions and activities.

So in the last post, I proposed a notion that simply being busy, though easily measured, is not a good way to determine productivity and it's certainly not a good way to improve health. So here's what I'd recommend. Measure how much downtime you were able to incorporate. View success as the amount of additional time you can spend in movement, rest, reflection, white space, or quality time with those you love. Those are the things that lead to a life of a less stress and not staying on that hamster wheel. Lower stress is the outcome we want, but since that's hard to measure, we should measure how we perform when working toward that outcome. These are the things that you can control. These are the things that you can adjust going forward.

Measure performance, not in how many activities you're engaged in, but in how much true, quality time you can incorporate. It's the pauses, the intervals, the small gaps in our lives, that make the magic. You'll get the outcome of lower stress that you desire, if you approach the steps to get there in the proper manner.

Why is it important to measure things with the right perspective in mind, especially when it comes to managing stress? Well, it's because what we measure informs how we view our success or failure in any activity. If my goal is to make every event on my calendar this week, on time, then that's what I'll measure. If my goal is to reduce stress in my life however, then I need to measure things that will contribute to lower stress.

Additionally, our score in these measures, the way we determine our level of success in any of these measures, influences what we think about ourselves and it influences our ability to continue on the journey. It essentially affects our motivation. So measuring the wrong things, things that don't matter, can be detrimental when your goal, your true goal, is overall better health.

All right, so this week's theme relates to assessing your performance and iterating or getting that constant improvement and in making adjustments going forward, adjusting your approach as you continue to get better.

So first, when it comes to assessing your performance, it's important that you measure yourself against something. You need a measure of performance. So my advice is to measure against what I'll call your yesterday self, because it's about improvement. It's about being better today than you were yesterday. And more specifically, it's about improving, based on the person that you used to be, how you used to act, or you used to conduct yourself.

The concept is that we don't necessarily want to try to be a hundred percent better, but rather just seek to be 1% better each day, or 2% better each week. And just as a side note, estimating this through a compound interest formula, if you improved or added to your habit just 2% each week, the consistency or the effectiveness of that habit would make you almost 300% or three times as effective over the course of a year. You can apply that formula to a lot of healthy habits.

So I'll go into a couple of techniques on how to improve and some approaches you can take to get that 1% or 2% better in the next video. Thanks.

Okay, so what are some ways in which you can seek to improve? I really like to describe this as either going deeper or getting broader or both. So you can go deeper by continuing to improve in a particular habit. For example, were you able to get a little more rest or eliminate something from your busy schedule last week or last month? Can you continue on that path and get even more rest or free up even more time? That's going deeper with an individual habit. Or, perhaps you were able to get more rest last week or last month, but for now, that's really all you can manage given your schedule.

So, you could go broader or get wider by expanding that healthy living approach to reducing stress by also reducing some of your obligations or commitments. Those two actions or habits combined, which number one, continuing to get that added rest and cutting back on your commitments or what you do, would give you two avenues to reducing stress in your life. It's a multi-pronged approach. You're casting a wider net and this is very effective because while one habit helps you to improve, a healthy living lifestyle is actually made up of multiple habits that work synergistically to improve your overall quality and healthiness of life.

All right, let's talk about lapses. Lapses are gaps in consistency and lapses are also a part of the process. Just like surges are a part of the process. There are times when you were going to be able to do more and be more productive, certain periods of time and just on the

opposite end, there are times when circumstances beyond your control, prevent you from being really productive at all.

So lapses will happen. So since we know this, I say, why not plan for them? I've talked before in my Principles of Healthier Living about intentionally adding downtime, or time away from practicing your habit constantly, so that you can remove the pressure of always and make them more sustainable. To try to perform a healthy habit every day is a daunting goal for consistency. So, maybe you opt for four to five days a week to complete a particular habit. Well, there's also benefit in adding a planned downtime in the form of chunks of time.

We do this every week in the Action Taker Academy, the monthly member program, practicing and tracking our personalized key habits, really only three weeks out of every four. Another example, these Fit Vid's, the ones like you're watching or listening to right now, are also a habit for me, but I take a week off from producing and publishing them every month and instead I use that time to help prepare my Action Taker monthly members, and those that I coach one-on-one for their healthier habits, their planned habits for the next month.

So there will be gaps in your consistency over time, but the key is to make them intentional and to be more consistent over time than not, that allows you to better yourself. And when you plan for the gaps in consistency, there's less chance that a gap or a lapse will catch you off guard. So you want to control what you can control.

All right, folks. So this is the final Fit Vid for the year, for 2020, and over the next couple of weeks during the holiday season, I'm going to practice what I'm preaching here and take some needed downtime for rest, for regeneration, and for family and I hope that you can do the same. I wish you and yours, a very happy and healthy, and peaceful holiday season.

Thank you for the privilege, once again, of providing these Fit Vid's, the podcast, and the weekly wrap-up to your inboxes, to your feeds, and to your social media. I'll be back at the beginning of the year with more Fit Vid posts on nutrition, fitness, and reducing stress, but until then, be blessed. Coach T signing out. I'll see you in 2021.

All right, there, you have it. Those are the final Fit Vid's of the Reducing Stress to Live Healthier Series and those are also the final Fit Vid's for 2020. It has been a bit of a crazy year, but one of the things that I always say, that consistency remains of the utmost importance. Som I've tried to stay consistent throughout this year, even with all of the

craziness that's been going on and hopefully this consistency, or a little bit of consistency through the podcast, through the messaging of the Fit Vid's, is something that you're able to apply in your daily lives.

As we move into 20 and 2021, I just want to wish you and yours, a happy and healthy holiday season and I look forward to working with you, encouraging you, and inspiring you in 2021, as you look to live a healthier life as well. So with that, Coach T signing out and I'll talk to you after the new year.