

Finding Time for FITNESS



Creative Ways to Fit Fitness into Your Busy Day

tip 1 ▶ Plan for fitness. Take 10 minutes at the end of the week to plan out your activities for the upcoming week. Once you have your fitness plan for the week, put it on your calendar or in your planner.

tip 2 ▶ Fitness does not have to be boring, dull, or inconvenient. Make it fun and be creative! Some creative fitness options include:

1. Park 10-15 minutes away from work, school, or the store and briskly walk the distance.
2. Watch your favorite television show while on a stationary bike or treadmill.
3. Listen to the news on the radio while walking or jogging.
4. Walk or take a bicycle to a regularly occurring meeting or activity.
5. Volunteer opportunities for park cleanup or greenbelt trail grooming.

There are many drawbacks to exercise including: sweaty clothes, smelly shoes, fatigue, discomfort, wearing spandex – possibly in public, finding “THE” sports bra to keep you in place at all times, extra loads of laundry, carrying around a gym bag, and your hair sticking out in ways you didn’t think possible.

So who would *want* to exercise? No doubt the drawbacks appear to significantly outweigh the benefits. But here’s the catch – the drawbacks are short term. The benefits are long term.

SEVERAL YEARS AGO I WAS WORKING FULL TIME, coaching for two local training groups, working on my master’s degree, and training for my first long distance triathlon. Multitasking took on a whole new meaning. I read textbooks while standing in line at the grocery store. I took conference calls in my car while still sweating and breathing heavily after a run workout at the track. The method to my madness was writing my daily schedule in 15 minute increments on sticky notes. When something or someone would change my schedule, *voila* – a new plan on a new sticky note.

Many women pursue that ideal work-life-fitness balance. However running around in a stressed-out, frenzied state doing everything but accomplishing nothing does not constitute a healthy lifestyle. It is difficult to find time for fitness. Difficult – but not impossible.

Major magazines tell readers that exercise and fitness are the paths to health and happiness. Guess what? They are right. If you do not take care of yourself, the impact ripples into all areas of your

life – from job performance or learning a new activity, to helping family or friends. The airlines actually have it right – you have to put on your own oxygen mask before you can help others put on theirs.

Health and fitness is a \$14.8 billion industry and does not include nutrition and weight loss, which is an additional \$44 billion industry. Billions of dollars aside, what defines physical fitness? The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines physical activity as, “Anything that gets your body moving.” The CDC recommends two types of physical activity each week to improve our health: muscle strengthening and aerobic conditioning. Add to that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommendation that adults should get at least two-and-a-half hours a week of various levels of physical activity to maintain health – that’s 30 minutes a day for five days. All these recommendations can become confusing and overwhelming. Try to keep your fitness goals simple to start: anything that gets your body moving for 30 minutes a day, five days a week. ★



To see an example of a 5-day fitness plan, go to:
www.austinwomanmagazine.com