

L LIFESTYLE

Make time for exercise

Ten common reasons we don't make an effort, and why we should

WE ALL INTEND to exercise regularly. But when it comes to putting intention to practice, only about 10 per cent are successful. Others happen to have numerous seemingly convincing excuses for not doing so. Here are some of the oft-quoted "reasons", and the reality behind them:



Reason 1: I just don't have time.
Facts: Everyone's day consists of 24 hours. It's all a question of priority. If you don't find time to exercise, you will have to find time to visit a hospital. The choice is yours. Anyway, somebody who has time for a book, a movie, the idiot box or a gossip session can't crib about time shortage, considering that one can exercise a lot even in half an hour.

Reason 2: I have no energy to do even household chores. How can I exercise?
Facts: The more you procrastinate, the more your energy will dwindle. Make a small beginning and energy will get generated by and by. Learn from an infant in a cradle. He cannot stand or sit. Yet, he moves his limbs all the time.

Reason 3: I started, but my aches and pains increased instead of vanishing.
Facts: You have not done for years what you should have done all your life. Whenever you commence, some discomfort is inevitable. While these pains will go away in a few days, the aches and diseases that may come your way because of not exercising will haunt you for months and even years.

Reason 4: Do I do my job/business or spend time exercising?
Facts: It's not an either-or situation. Have you ever left for office/business without wearing clothes because so much work was waiting for you that you had no time to dress? Going to work without exercising is akin to going out without dressing.

Reason 5: I'm too old to start.
Facts: You are too old NOT to start. In youth, you were fairly active throughout the day. Now that you are sedentary, you just cannot escape a workout. Not exercising then was inexcusable. Now it is sacrilege.

Reason 6: I have exercised like crazy during my school/college days.
Facts: Basking in your college glory will be like not bathing/shaving/eating now just because you did enough of that in the good old days.

Reason 7: Whenever I get time, I do go out for a walk/swim.
Facts: Suppose you have to employ a person. He may be talented but what if he says: "I will come to work only when I have time." Will you hire him?

Reason 8: I am sure once or twice a week is good enough.
Facts: Not really. You can be off exercise only on those days when you are absolutely off food. You eat daily. So work out daily. Okay, maybe one weekly off, but no more.

Reason 9: My weekdays are hopelessly packed. But I make up through heavy exercise on weekends.
Facts: That will do more harm than good. The body will be stiff due to four-five days of inactivity and the Sunday round of vigorous tennis or squash may cause a catch or muscle pull.

Reason 10: There is always a tomorrow.
Facts: Of course there is. But it never comes. IANS

ALIGN YOUR LIFE

Five-Minute Meditation

EVERYONE IS LIVING in the fast lane these days. You drive to work while talking on the phone and making mental notes.

Or you are cooking while loading the washing machine and are on the phone while keeping an eye on your toddler. Multi tasking has become a way of life. While planning your day or week ahead, do you focus on yourself? Do you even realise how much stress you tend to absorb while performing your day-to-day activities? By the end of the week you are no longer able to go on and invariably your body starts breaking down.

The practice of meditation has helped combat stress for centuries and helped improve mental and physical wellbeing. So what if you don't have a couple of hours to spare? Practise five minutes of simple meditation twice a day to relax your mind, body and soul.

- *Start by lighting incense or scented candles.
- *Play soft music and switch off your phone.
- *Sit in a comfortable position or on the floor. Close your eyes and slow down your breathing.
- *Let all thoughts pass through your mind. Don't stop or resist thoughts.
- *Focus on the soothing music and keep breathing slowly.
- *In a few seconds you will notice that your body is becoming loose and the mind is beginning to relax.
- *Visualise yourself sitting in a beautiful bubble made of warm white light. This light now slowly penetrates your entire body, all the cells, helping you to relax and sooth all the muscles and joints.
- *Repeat in your mind that this bubble is like a protective shield around your body and no matter what happens around you, the stress will not be able to penetrate this protective shield from this moment onwards.
- *Continue breathing deeply and slowly until you relax completely.

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