



Emmanuella St. Juste

Are You Afraid of Commitment? Steps Toward a Healthier You

By Emmanuella St. Juste

Although generally people admit to knowing what will make them healthier. There seems, however to be a major disconnect between acknowledging the information and practically implementing health changes into everyday, individual actions.

The first step is to decide that you are going to be physically fit and understand that it requires a lifelong commitment of time and effort. It must become one of those things like brushing your teeth or bathing, you just do it without any thought. Patience is essential! Trying too much too soon can sometimes lead to quitting before you have a chance to reap the rewards of an improved quality of life and a lifetime of improved health and fitness. Remember, you cannot regain in a few days or weeks what you have lost in years of sedentary living or poor eating habits.

There are four key principles of achieving a healthy lifestyle that are simple and straightforward:

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY ~ Be physically active every day

The Surgeon General states that, "Regular physical activity that is performed on most days of the week reduces the risk of developing or dying from some of the leading causes of illness and death in the United States."

According to American Counsel of Sports Medicine (ACSM), physical fitness components are:

- 1) Cardiorespiratory Endurance – at least three 30-minute of moderate activity five (5) days a week or 20-minute of vigorous activity three (3) days a week; examples are jogging, group exercise classes, swimming, cycling, walking.
- 2) Muscular Strength-at least two or three 45-minute sessions of effectively lifting weights to increase strength.

- 3) Muscle Endurance – at least two or three 30-minute sessions per week such as push-ups, calisthenics, sit-ups, pull-ups, and weight training for major muscle groups.
- 4) Flexibility – 10 to 12-minutes of daily stretching exercises perform slowly, without any bouncing motion, preferably after a cool down.



NUTRITION ~ Eat a nutritious diet

Eating a nutritious diet promotes health and reduces the risk of death or disability from chronic disease. But, once again, there seems to be a gap between the dietary recommendations and what we eat on a daily basis.

You are what you eat. Simply put! There's no big secret when it comes to a nutritious and healthy diet in order to control your weight: your body will consume only as many calories as your body needs... the rest will be store as fat. According to www.MyPyramid.gov, fruits and vegetables should be the biggest part of a healthy diet. Not only do they provide much needed vitamins and minerals, they also provide fiber and other things that are vital to good health.

A BIG plus is they are very filling and are low in fat and calories. Visit www.MyPyramid.gov to find guidelines for healthy eating based on your age, sex, and how active you are.

PREVENTION ~ Get preventative medical screening

Medical screenings can protect you and your family from many preventable diseases. For example, hypertension (high blood pressure) is an important risk factor for heart disease. But unless you get screened for hypertension, you won't be aware of the extra risk you're living with - that why it is called "the silent killer".

Medical screening can find disease early and that is the best time to treat them. A physical every twelve months by your physician is highly recommended. Your desirable numbers for:

- 1) Cholesterol <200 (LDL <100, your bad cholesterol and HDL ≤60 your good cholesterol)
- 2) Blood Pressure 120/80,
- 3) Glucose ≤ 99,
- 4) Triglycerides <150,
- 5) Body Mass Index (BMI) 18.5 – 24.9

HEALTHY CHOICES ~ Avoid risky behaviors

- Don't Use Tobacco Products
- Mange Your Stress Well
- Avoid Excessive Alcohol Consumption
- Practice Safe Driving Habits
- Avoid Drug Use and Misuse
- Practice Safe Sexual Behavior

Good mental health is vital to your total well-being. Although substance abuse is a widespread problem, depression affects almost 19 million Americans each year. Like diabetes and heart disease, it is a serious medical illness and requires treatment from a doctor. Examples are depression, bi-polar disease, alcohol or drug abuse, etc.

Old habits die hard, but the good news is that they do die. Don't lose hope or

beat yourself up over it if you're having trouble breaking bad habits. It's not that easy to change your ways. Just keep plugging away. Start by replacing old habits with new ones. The key is to learn how to take care of and pamper yourself in ways that are life affirming, not self-destructive. Learn how to deal with sabotaging emotions by establishing some healthy patterns of behavior and investing in your physical and emotional well-being.

If you judge yourself every time you're in front of a mirror, try focusing on the things you love about yourself. When was the last time you looked in the mirror and told yourself how great your features are and how beautiful you look? If you're constantly looking to the media for celebrity fitness trends, try finding more realistic role models — real people who've lost weight, made positive lifestyle changes or achieved other goals similar to yours. They will be the most inspiring. Start paying attention to people you know.

If you tend to blow off your workouts until your vacation rolls around — or there's some other event, like a wedding, lighting a fire under you — ease yourself back into your daily workouts. Without commitment, you won't be able to achieve the goals you truly desire. Put your life in perspective. Everything is a choice — from how you feel when you wake up in the morning to whether or not you floss your teeth at night. To make the right choices, you need to ask the right questions: What is my true goal, and how are the choices I'm making going to help me achieve that goal?

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Learn more about Emmanuella at: www.justefitness.com.

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