



BFit4Life Newsletter

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Welcome to the BFit4Life Newsletter

Hiya All,

As the festive season is beginning, this year's fitness season is coming to a close. Near the end of any competitive season, there are teams aiming to peak and fight for prizes, while there are others fighting relegation so they can continue the fight for another season. Each season in the Premiership, there are teams happy in mid-table, while other teams lose their consistency and slide down the table towards the drop zone.

The league table is like your body, it never lies. The position you find your body in reflects the story of your season, your consistency, and your dealings in the food and drink transfer market. At this stage of the season, you are left with two choices. You can learn from the fitness lessons of this past year and put in a strong finish that will leave you in prime position for the beginning of next season, or you can let the rot sink in, and leave yourself in a perilous state for the New Year.

Life is about choices. I hope when you read this month's letter, it will help you make the right choice that will enable you to play for the whole season. League titles are not handed out to teams after 5 league games. And if you give health your best effort, you will see yourself at the top of the Championship rather than sliding rapidly for the relegation trap-door.

Damien



MERRY
CHRISTMAS

Are You Dreaming of a Slight Christmas?

As the festive season approaches, the tightening up of finances in what has been a difficult year has seen very few additions to your wardrobe.

Events in our economy have seen ladies searching for last year's lovely party dress for Xmas parties instead of opting for a new one and men have been loosening up the belt buckles of their trousers as they bulge in all the wrong areas. An over indulgence in the sweet and alcohol department has made you realise that it wasn't just the stock market that was fluctuating; your weight has been too. The dress doesn't quite fit the same as it did last year and with the traditional holiday party season about to begin, you start writing off the end of the year as it's too late to make a change this year. You can always start again in January.

There are many who believe that it is impossible to stay in shape and to eat healthily without turning into a Xmas scrooge over the holiday season. You may be one of them, choosing to sprawl across the couch watching festive movies as your knights in shining armour - chocolate and ice-cream - come to rescue you from the hangover from hell and the stressful year! Reacting to stress by eating sweet things or drinking alcohol is known as a conditioned response. This associated response between stress and sweet foods has been nurtured since you first cried as a baby. Your parents un-knowingly were the instigators when they may have given you chocolate or fizzy drinks to stop you crying and make you feel better. This downward spiral of comfort eating in response to stress may have continued ever since. This is one reason why, this year, you are left dreaming of a slight Christmas! The good news is that you can turn over a new leaf and enjoy your Christmas whilst still training and remaining healthy.



*The dress doesn't quite fit the same as
it did last year!*

Are You Dreaming of a Slight Christmas? - continued

You don't need to wait until the New Year. At this time of the year too many people use this excuse to avoid getting in shape. Ireland's most famous soccer player Roy Keane made an impassioned speech after the World cup in Saipan, stating that when you fail to plan, you are planning to fail. By stating that you are waiting till the New Year you are expecting to blow your diet and skip workouts over the holidays. You are expecting to eat more, to exercise less and to gain weight. This abdication of control of the future outcome of your health leaves you hoping that you will maintain your current shape at best, or at worst only slide back a little bit.

This negative expectancy leads to a self-fulfilling prophecy and so by the first week of January, you're in the worst shape you have been in for a year and you frantically make resolutions to shed the excess fat you've gained.

Why be the guilt ridden person who is trying to reclaim the body-shape they used to have when you can be the person whose New Year's Resolution is to be in the best shape of their life? Life is all about choices and the decisions we make have outcomes. Why not make a decision to achieve your potential now? Why wait until the New Year?



*You don't need to wait until the New Year.
This is one of the most common excuses to
avoid getting in shape*

As someone passionate about health, I have a lot of discipline but at times I have to use an extra bit of will-power to resist the temptation to devour certain foods. Despite the tantalising scent and taste of a freshly baked cake, I don't pig out when one is put in front of me. I content myself with a slice, savouring the mouth watering taste instead of polishing off the whole cake. Nothing will ever taste as good as being lean and strong feels. If you remember that line, you will stay focussed on your goals and stay on track for success.

To accomplish success over the holidays you need to plan. By scheduling your workouts, you will stay focussed. This way you are not trying to squeeze in a workout whenever you have time left over, you'll find that there is never any time left over. To overcome the obstacles you will face, I recommend that you WRITE down compelling goals in fitness and nutrition for the holiday period. If they are not written down, they are nothing but wishes. The majority of people do not set goals of any sort over the Christmas period, yet 80% of people who do are successful.



*If you do however fall
completely off the wagon,
don't beat yourself up
about it and give up all
hope. No-one will ever be
100% strict with their diet
and a slip up is no excuse to
continue pigging out!*

When you are designing your master plan you must include cheat meals or days. The question to Cheat, or not to Cheat on your diet will be asked by many people whose goal is to change their body-shape. If you plan your cheat meals or days in advance, you must learn to set limits for the cheat. Psychologically, by cheating, you will be answering your cravings. Physiologically your body will know it will get excess calories from time to time so it will release fat cells held hostage whilst also boosting your metabolic rate. A few cheats a week over Xmas will not seriously affect your physique that is of course once you are still training.

If you do however fall completely off the wagon, don't beat yourself up about it and give up all hope. No-one will ever be 100% strict with their diet and a slip up is no excuse to continue pigging out. To do that is like getting a puncture in your car and immediately getting out to puncture the other three wheels. What would you think of someone who did that to their car if they got a puncture???

Exactly, now are you going to treat your car better than your body this Christmas?

To treat your body better you need to be consistent in your eating patterns, even on Christmas day. Skipping breakfast to make room for the bigger dinner will be a great way to invite a binge that could set you back for days and lead to you having a bloated belly that rumbles like a bowlful of jelly. The only person who should be proud of that claim is Santa! If you seriously want to drop your body-fat, you must be in a caloric deficit. This means that you obey the laws of energy balance, i.e. burning more calories than you are taking in so monitor your portion sizes when you are at the dinner table.

Are You Dreaming of a Slight Christmas? - continued

Sure your friends will act like anchors and try and drag you down, but you must have high standards and don't expect their standards to match yours. It is hard to soar like an eagle, but if you surround yourself with turkeys, it will be even harder!! The majority of your friends have planned in advance to fail over Christmas so don't let their negative influence allow you to be dragged down with them.

No matter where you are, you will always have choices. Sometimes you have to choose between bad and worse. Other times you can choose between good and better.

But always make the best choice possible based on whatever your options are. If nothing else, you can choose to eat a small portion of something "bad" rather than a huge portion, thereby obeying the law of calorie balance. Chances are that there's probably something healthy on the menu at every holiday gathering. As you know, lean proteins and fibrous carbs are great for getting lean, so fill up on the turkey breast, try to get a vegetable in there, and go easy on the desserts.

If you are having a few drinks on special occasions, then go ahead and have a drink or two. But if you're serious about your fitness goals, know that alcohol and muscles just don't mix. It affects your energy levels which has a negative impact on your workouts. It affects your ability to burn fat. It is high in calories and it lowers testosterone for five days. By all means, toast in the New Year with a glass of wine, but know the one, that's one too many and don't binge drink.

In conclusion, there is no reason why health and fitness should spoil your holiday program but neither should the holidays destroy your health and fitness program.

Thanks for taking the time to read my newsletters,

Enjoy the holidays; make time for friends and family but most of all,

Train Hard and Be Somebody!



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Next Month's Issue

★ Success Story

Read next month how one of my clients, John Mackey, achieved remarkable changes in his body shape in 2008. As you set about making your New Year's resolutions why not gain inspiration by reading how John set his goals and planned for success .

