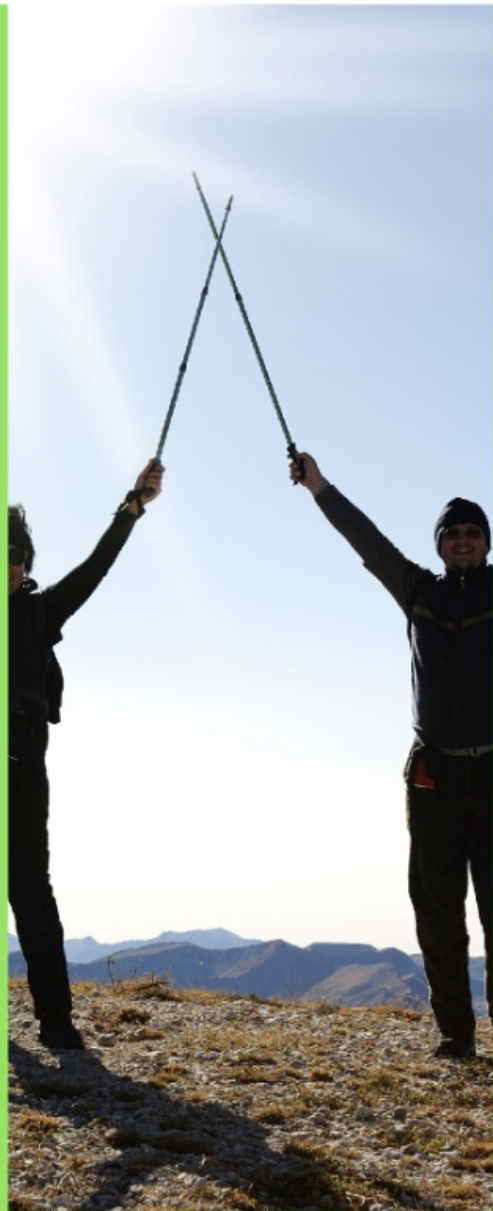


PASTFIFTY FITNESS MANUAL

YOUR TOTAL HEALTH SOLUTION



Burn Off Your Baggage
Body, Mind and ... Financial
with this
8 Elements for Complete
Fitness Guide!

Find Your Way Around

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Getting Started

Everyone can be fit and healthy! Or at least **fitter and healthier!**

But just so there's no confusion. If you are looking to develop 6 pack abs, a slinky model figure or bulging muscles, **you're in the wrong place!**

Thanks for visiting!

On the other hand, if you're looking for a "spring clean":

- to clear out some baggage – both body and mind,
- to feel better, look better, be more self-assured and revive your zest,
- to be contented with your life, your lifestyle, what you eat and how you see yourself,

then **you're in the right place.**

PastFiftyFitness is **all about building a balanced and rewarding life.**

With support from a community who cares.

Supporting you to remodel your body, mind, and attitude.

Helping you to live your life to the full.

Overcome your doubts and fears and become a “new” you. The one you always hoped and dreamed you would be.

So, what’s important?

Accept the things you can’t change and do everything you can about changing the things you can!

One critical, often overlooked, element of a total personal fitness package is **financial fitness**.

As you get older it can become a looming threat. Unless you are financially fit you will struggle to maximize the other elements of fitness.

Wallowing deep in a cauldron of financial fears you can never be free. Never free, never fit.

Stress gets in the way.

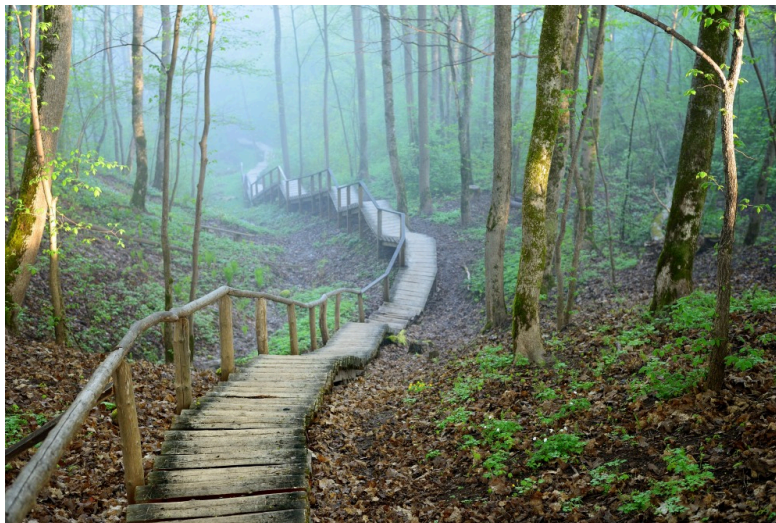
Stress is the barrier to a balanced life.

The **PastFiftyFitness community** is here to support you.

Holding your hand as you set out to achieve the possibilities and opportunities you may have always wanted ... and ones you may never even have thought about.

I will be there to guide you on your path. You will never be alone.

Fun friends with interesting, uplifting stories will be your inspiration.



1: Move More (Walk, Jog, Skip, Dance or Whatever)



Everyone knows that exercise has many benefits. But for many the thought of exercise is as appetizing as the prospect of eating day old roadkill.

They hate it! Or at least that's what they say.

When starting out, or starting over, there is no secret ... you must simply start doing anything that gets you moving!

There are so many options!

So, to make it more appetizing, choose something you enjoy. Or something you dislike the least!

Start with something simple and easy! Set out to walk to the corner when you come home. Walk around the block after dinner. Do some gardening. Walk stairs instead of taking the elevator. Put on some music and dance around the room – no one is watching!

Set small achievable goals.

Doing 5 minutes a day is **far better** than a plan to do two 30 minutes sessions a week ... and doing nothing!

Achieving small goals is far better than setting big goals that hibernate in your head!

A recent study published in the [Journal of Neurophysiology](#) found that a regular program of simply imagining exercise can tone muscle, delay atrophy, and even makes your muscles stronger!

If you are already a moderate mover ... just do a little more! But not too far, or too fast too soon. That is a certain recipe for injury.

Injury can be a giant step backwards. Older bodies take longer to heal.

Building up motivation and the will to start again is frustrating and takes effort and time.

Nothing happens until something moves. Start slowly. Do something you enjoy. Do it regularly.

Tip: To monitor my activity, I use a [Garmin Vivoactive](#) wearable or use the Health App on my iPhone.

2: Stretching Flexibility and Balance



When exercising remember to breathe!! Seems an absurd thing to say but at times when you are taking strain, you'll find yourself holding your breath.

So, keep repeating ... breathe, breathe, breathe.

One warning before you start.

Don't try the following stretches' if you can't get up off the floor!!

My favourite stretch (very easy) is just lying on my back and

stretching as "long" as I can. Stretch your arms up as far as you can and

your toes down as far as you can. Enjoy the feeling of your joints and muscles “releasing” for about 30 seconds. It feels so good.

Then clasp your fingers together and very slowly bring your hands down towards your head with your elbows pushed as close as possible to the floor.

You’ll feel your shoulders opening and you’ll experience a pleasant stretch. When your elbows just touch the floor, open your shoulders, and hold this position for about another 30 seconds.

This is a great stretch if you spend a lot of time sitting at a desk as your shoulders get hunched and tight. The stretch delivers pleasurable relief.

The second stretch is also simple but do it carefully.

My twitchy back sometimes spasms in protest if I stretch too far.

Sit upright on the floor with your legs stretched out in front of you.

Stretch your arms forward and bend forward **slowly**. Keep your head up and your back as straight as possible. Each time you breathe out increase

the stretch until you reach a comfortable limit. Hold this position for 30 to 60 seconds.

Repeat the two stretches two more times.

This routine will only take about 6 or 7 minutes and you should feel the difference.

As I've got older, I've realized how important it is to stretch. I never do any strenuous exercise, cycling, jogging or gym without dynamic stretching to warm up and a static stretching session at the end.

Tip: To concentrate on the stretching and not counting the time, I use an interval timer on my iPhone - the free version of an interval timer [iPhone Interval Timer](#). Its Android twin can be found at [Android Interval Timer](#)



3: Learning



“Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young” ~ Henry Ford.

To paraphrase this quote which speaks to me.

You're old when you stop learning

In our day-to-day life it's easy to see the world as a mess.

With the endless daily doses of negative press and stories. The dire state of economies, education, crime, wars, corruption, and a never-ending loss of freedom.

All the failures of our democratic “freedoms”.

But balancing these disasters and sadness is **a golden lining of goodness**, incredible bravery and sacrifice and the exciting advances in technology.

Technology is developing exponentially and creating opportunities that were science fiction a few years ago. Bio-genetics, inter terrestrial travel and living, 3 D printing, drones, online education, robotics, the internet of things and big data.

All offer exciting employment opportunities and solutions to the world problems and challenges.

There is no excuse to not keep abreast with change and keep learning. The internet provides us with outstanding learning resources with **many sites providing free tuition.**

Stimulating world class resources to keep your mind active. Supplying you with the knowledge to completely reinvent yourself at any age.

Through some of these sites you can share your knowledge and skills by providing content and courses.

Tip: My favourite learning sites are: [Khan Academy](#) , [Alison](#) , [Coursera](#) and [Udemy](#). There are also many more. Somewhere in all these there is something for everyone.

4: Mindfulness (Meditation / Prayer)



Photo: ST

“Do what you can, with what you have, where you are”

Theodore Roosevelt

We spend most of our lives regretting the past and hoping for the future.

All we really have is the present.

We live most of our life unconsciously. So automated that we seldom focus on our feelings, thoughts or being conscious of our bodies.

Even a few conscious minutes a day has a calming effect.

A moment to be in the moment and freeing your mind from the rigours of daily living.

Mindfulness will teach you to relax and melt stress away. To cope with demanding situations and sleep better.

Healing yourself through being in the now.

Tip: There are many online mindfulness apps and programs. With [Calm](#) a one place to start. But apps and programs are not the only way to be mindful. For me I will do mindful walking where I focus on my breath, or the steady rhythm of steps, or how movement feels in my body. I will also purposefully turn my attention to the sounds I hear, like birds or the wind, or sights like the patterns of sunlight as they come through the trees.

The important focus here is the now!

5: Eating



“I can’t control everything in my life. But I can control what I put in my mouth.” ~ Anonymous

Generally, in the western world **we eat too much!!**

We get fat because we eat too much!!

Then we blame our weight gain on our age or some psychological or physical condition.

Today there are **no excuses for eating junk food**. Although the temptation is always in our face. Seduction on every street corner provided by some instant gratification, fast food joint.

There are always **fresh food options**. Sourcing, preparing, and eating these may be a bit more of a mission ... but the payback to our health is huge.

So, it all boils down to the **choices you make**. No arm twisting and no forced eating.

As you age you need less food. Even if you eat small portions and reasonably healthily, it's quite easy to exceed your daily needs. Especially if you don't exercise.

To get a better idea of the quality of your eating habits there are many apps which are quite comprehensive and easy to use.

Tip: When I first used [MyFitnessPal](#) I was very surprised to see how easy it was to exceed the recommended daily allowance. (I gave up drinking my glasses of wine during the week!!)

6: Breathing

“Feelings come and go like clouds in the sky. Conscious breathing is my anchor.” ~ Thich Nhat Hanh



Take a deep breath!

Feel the air moving over your tongue, down your throat and filling your lungs. Hold it for a few seconds and then slowly breathe out through your mouth. Keep blowing through pursed lips until your lungs are empty.

Slowly breathe in through your nose filling your lungs from the bottom and slowly up to your throat. Hold the breath for about 10 seconds and then breathe out slowly through your relaxed lips.

When did you last do that? Breathe properly?

We spend our whole life breathing and don't give it a second, or even a first, thought.

Conscious breathing is relaxing and a great way to get rid of stress. Deep breath by deep breath.

Most of our breathing is shallow and unconscious. It gets us through our life. But by doing it consciously we can improve our health, feel more relaxed, in tune with our body, with less anxiety and stress.

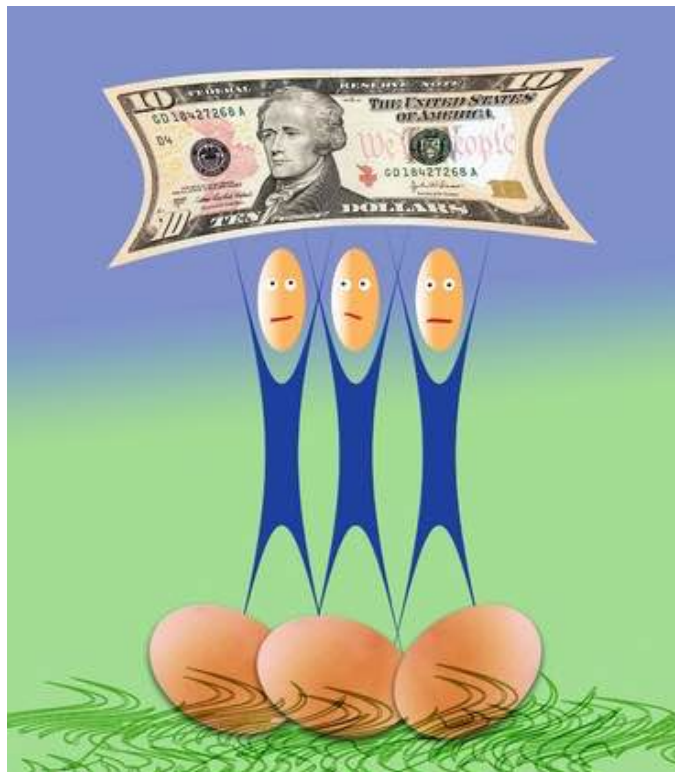
Try deep and controlled breathing whenever you feel uptight.

You'll get rapid relief.

Tip: [Wim Hof](#) has performed some amazing feats in his life and he puts a lot of it down to effective breathing.

7: Financial Fitness

“It is a kind of spiritual snobbery that makes people think they can be happy without money” ~ Albert Camus



You are probably asking **“what has finance got to do with fitness?”**

It's simple. In my experience if I'm not financially fit, I find it very hard to be able to pull all the other elements of my life together. There is too much money related stress to be able to benefit from the other pieces. It's like having a wobbly legged chair.

Suze Orman said, "A big part of financial freedom is having your heart and mind free from worry about the what-ifs of life".

If you think about it a big part of **total fitness is having your mind free of financial worries.**

You don't have to be rich. You just must be comfortable about your finances with your chosen lifestyle. **Financially stress free.**

Financial fitness is not adopting the "[ostrich effect](#)" to your financial situation. Thinking everything is okay or somehow will be okay.

It involves honesty, awareness, knowledge, and practice.

Tip: To stay abreast of some opinions I read the newsletters of [Casey Daily Dispatch](#) and [Morning Brew](#). And [Sovereign](#) also has some interesting reading.

8: Family and Friends



Relationships make up a significant part of our lives.

Close relationships should be our core of stability and belonging. Unfortunately, they are often difficult and confusing to understand.

We are faced with a society that is, “Not what we had when we were growing up”. But as much as we pine for these **good old days, they**

are not going to return ... they are gone forever.

We must adapt. We must face the reality of broken homes, layoffs from work, fractured societies, and unemployment. Crowned by unprecedented levels of debt.

A psychological therapist recently commented that, “estrangements in families in the US are becoming an epidemic”.

Children are living at home for longer or are returning to live at home after their lives have faced an overwhelming hurdle. Young people cannot afford to buy their own houses.

In other cases, parents are relying on their children to look after them. To carry their financial burden.

Relationships to jobs and the companies we work for have changed.

All these situations which were exceptions when we were growing up are becoming the norm.

If you live with relationships that are sources of worry and stress it is gruelling trying to achieve a complete life balance.

Tip: We need to understand and accept that family and relationship dynamics have new challenges. And to manage these, we must develop new skills and build new resources.

Conclusion

To achieve total fitness at any age, one must have all the elements of physical, financial, mental, and spiritual in balance.

Any one that's out of balance will detract from the total. Any missing pieces can completely derail the complete fit life process.

But being extra strong in a single element may also offset the negative impact of a weaker one.

Being physically fit prepares you for unexpected incidents like accidents or diseases. It also equips you to manage stress and helps in handling difficult relationships.

The objective is to work on as many elements as you can. Making small bite improvements every day as you strive to be ... **the best you can be.**

I would love to hear your thoughts, or any questions or concerns so please contact me at patrick@pastfiftyfitness.com