

## Train S.M.A.R.T.

What are you exercising for? Are you training to lose those last 10 lbs? Are you training for an event? Are you training to maintain joint mobility and function? Or, are you exercising at all? Like good nutrition, sleeping and breathing, exercise should be a regular part of every day life. Often it's not, and if it is, there is little thought or direction put into the effort. Perhaps it's not that exercise isn't valued; it's just sometimes there is no focus. It's hard to make progress when you don't know where you're headed. Here is something to think about when planning your exercise routine:

**“S”** Make your training goals **specific**. What exactly are you trying to achieve? Write down your goals and pay attention to detail. How many inches or pounds do you want to lose? What weight are you aspiring to lift? What time are you going for on your next run? The more specific your goal, the more likely you will make a plan to achieve it.

**“M”** Set a goal with **measurable** results. How will you know when you've achieved a goal if you don't know what it is? People tend to stick with something when they are successful. If you can measure your results, then you will know when you reach your goal and can set a new one.

**“A”** This brings the idea that your goal must be **attainable**. Set yourself up for success by making goals that are possible. Most of us are past our days as a high caliber athlete, so don't set Olympian goals that you will be unable to achieve. Or, if you have many pounds to lose, set small, attainable goals and celebrate each loss along the way.

**“R”** **Realistic** expectations are important. If you decide to get up at the crack of dawn to run but aren't a morning person, you're bound to fall short. It's important to know yourself and decide what will work for you. Exercise is not a 'one size fits all'; there are many ways to maintain health and fitness, it's a matter of figuring out what works for each of us.

**“T”** Set aside **time** for yourself. So often I hear people say that 'it's hard right now because: it's summer, it's Christmas, it's my birthday, etc. etc. There will always be 'something' that will be there ready to sabotage your efforts. It's important to work around the various inevitable obstacles and find time to fit in workouts, proper nutrition and sleep. Some days will be better than others, but remember the 80-20 rule: if you do your best 80% of the time with your diet, exercise and sleep, you'll be on the winning end of things.

SMART goal setting, planning and training will focus your efforts in a positive way so that you will make wise use of your time and energy. It's more a matter of being purposeful than anything. Once you know what you want to achieve with your health, it's much easier to be successful.

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Shawna is shaking up the fitness routines of several people in her Adventure Boot Camps. For more information, please visit her website.