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**KEEP YOUR
HEALTH IN
CHECK**

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**6 EASY WAYS TO
IMPROVE YOUR
HEALTH**

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**HOW TO FIT IN
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FITNESS**

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**WE ASKED,
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ISSUE NO. 7 | SEPTEMBER 2019

THE WELLNESS ISSUE

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happy september!

Is fall anyone else's favorite time of the year? I've been known to dream of apple cider and chilly, stormy days in July so needless to say, I am welcoming September with very open, flannel-covered arms! But for as cozy as September can be, it can also be a little chaotic as the carefree days of summer start to fade away and the regular to-do's of our typical day to day start to creep back in.

While there might be little we can do to reduce our obligations, we do have control over how we treat ourselves and our overall well being. That's why in this issue, we're focusing on and prioritizing Wellness. Because unfortunately, for many of us, putting wellness at the top of our to do list is something we fail to do too often.

And when we fail to do that, everything else slips. We start to not feel good both physically and mentally, feelings of unfulfillment start to creep in, our relationships suffer... Maybe we even feel some guilt because we know how good we feel—and therefore ARE—when we do put in that effort. So let's do just that!

We'll start by identifying if you're feeling burnt out with 20 signs you might be pushing yourself too hard (page 4). A 'healthy lifestyle' is so much more than just the activity you do and the food you eat so we're sharing some all encompassing healthy lifestyle goals that are easy enough to implement right now (page 12). From there, we'll talk about

fitness and how to fit it into your already busy life—I promise, it's easier than you may think! (page 18).

Our practical application worksheets for this month will allow you to dig deep into exactly what wellness means to you and to make goals around that, along with a couple of tools that you'll find extremely helpful if the food you eat is a part of what wellness means to you. And last but not least, my personal favorite worksheet is our habit tracker!

If your idea of the perfect fall day is cozying up with a steaming cup of your favorite hot drink and a good book, check out this month's recommended reading—*The Wellness Project* by Phoebe Lapine. This book is one woman's journey to fight the odds of her autoimmune disease by prioritizing wellness and living life to the fullest! It's a really inspiring read! You can learn more about it on page 10.

Lastly, you'll want to check out for some great things in our Additional Resources section on page 17. Especially if you've been curious about the Keto diet or if you KNOW you need to drink more water but just can't seem to do it. We've got you covered!



Amanda

EDITOR IN CHIEF

KEEP YOUR HEALTH IN CHECK

20 SIGNS YOU MIGHT BE PUSHING YOURSELF TOO HARD

RUTH SOUKUP

Ever feel like you are on the edge of insanity?

As moms, most of us are guilty of occasionally—even frequently—burning the candle at both ends. Because, let's face it—our lives are BUSY! Between kids and spouses, caring for your home, holding down a job, and dealing with a million other responsibilities, sometimes it just feels like more than we can handle.

But the reality is that when we try to take on too much too often, we will eventually burn out. In fact, you might even be feeling burned out right now. Maybe you are tired all the time, or having trouble staying focused. Maybe you're getting sick. Maybe you feel disconnected from your friends or your spouse. Maybe you feel depressed or anxious or stressed.

When we're overwhelmed, our lives suffer. We snap at our children or scream at our spouse or burst into tears for no reason. We sometimes drop important balls, miss appointments or birthdays, or let people down. We might try to alleviate our stress by overeating, spending money we don't really have, or engaging in unhealthy behaviors (like that third glass of wine), but those coping mechanisms only tend to make things worse.

Personally, I'm the kind of person that likes being busy, at least most of the time. I love having big projects to work on and lots of irons in the fire. Most of the time, it makes me feel good about myself when I accomplish something difficult, or when I take on a challenge that appears to be insurmountable.

Except when I get overwhelmed. Because then I hate being busy, and all I want to do is stop the madness.

But I'm learning, slowly, that sometimes it is okay to let things go. For instance, a few years ago we tried homeschooling for a year. There was a lot I loved about it, but there was also a lot I didn't. Eventually we made the hard decision to send our girls back to school.

I'm not going to lie, I felt like a big fat failure.

But once I admitted it wasn't working for our family, there was an enormous sense of relief that washed



over me. I didn't realize the toll it had taken until it was over. Life is like that. So often, we don't realize just how frustrated we are or how challenging a situation is until it's over.

Keep in mind, there are quite a few signs and symptoms that indicate you might be pushing yourself a little too hard. (It's also a topic that I discuss in detail in my book, *Unstuffed: Decluttering Your Home, Mind & Soul*, which speaks to the fact that the clutter in our lives isn't always just the physical stuff filling up our homes, but often the mental and spiritual clutter that weighs us down and makes us feel out of whack.)

But just like runners training for a race, there's a point when you want to push yourself to achieve optimum results, but not so hard that you crash and burn. Here are some surefire signs you might be pushing yourself too hard:

PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

1. EXHAUSTION AND SLEEP ISSUES

If you're feeling tired all the time or if you're battling insomnia (or both), these are clear signs you may be in over your head. Try to aim for 7½ to 8 hours of sleep per night. If you just can't seem to get what you need or if you're still exhausted despite hitting the 8-hour quota, please visit your doctor.

2. FREQUENT ILLNESS

Everybody gets a cold or flu bug now and again, but if you're sick all the time, something might be wrong. This is a big one for me. Have you ever heard, "If you don't take a break, your body will take one for you"? One season I experienced colds and respiratory infections for six months straight!

3. HEADACHES AND STOMACHACHES

Even if you're a migraine sufferer or if you have digestive issues, constant flare-ups can be a symptom and sign of stress. If you notice your body is experiencing more pain and discomfort than usual, see a doctor and consider addressing the source of some of the stress, if at all possible.

4. SPORTS INJURIES

If you (or your kids) are frequently experiencing sports injuries and strains, perhaps you're training too hard or taking on too many physical challenges. Kids can be taking on too much as well, so it's up to you as a parent to reinforce limits and help them understand it's okay to sit it out once in a while.



EMOTIONAL SYMPTOMS

5. FEELING OVERWHELMED

We all feel overwhelmed once in a while, but if you're regularly feeling like things are spinning out of control and it seems like you can't get a handle on anything, it might be time to take a break and reset.

6. FORGETTING THINGS

Again, everyone forgets things sometimes, but if you're noticing marked confusion or forgetfulness, it might be a sign of too much stress. The worst part of forgetting things is how it compounds the feelings of stress even more so. If you're searching for answers on the tip of your tongue, it might be time for some rest and relaxation. Our brains need breaks, too.

7. FEELING STRESSED, ANXIOUS OR ANGRY

If you feel you're on the verge of screaming at someone or ready to explode all the time, it can be really miserable. Of course, it's normal to feel nervous, worried or angry sometimes, but if it seems you're in a constant state of irritation and distress, it's probably time to seek some help or to cut back on your to-do list. A big red flag? Erupting in anger for almost no reason.

8. FEELING SAD, DEPRESSED, OR IN DESPAIR

A little sadness is natural, even healthy. (Who doesn't need a good cry every once in a while?) Clinical depression, however, is dangerous and should be taken very seriously. As a sufferer of depression, I can attest that it can be utterly overwhelming and is usually very discernible from simply feeling blue. Depression is crushing and life-threatening. If you feel you're depressed, tearful or unhappy most of the time, then please reach out and get some help.

RELATIONSHIP SYMPTOMS

9. FREQUENT FIGHTING

If you and your spouse can barely be around each other without fighting, or if you're experiencing a higher-than-usual amount of conflict in your relationship, it could be a sign you're both stretched too thin. Take a step back before it takes a toll on your relationship.



10. LASHING OUT AT YOUR KIDS

We've all had moments when we've snapped at our kids, and it feels terrible, of course. If you find you're short-tempered or easily frustrated with your children for benign situations, it may be a sign you're stressed-out.

11. ISOLATING YOURSELF OR FEELING LIKE YOU AREN'T SOCIAL ENOUGH

For some people, every weekend means a social gathering or activity. For others, maybe your social calendar only needs to be visited a few times a month. You know what's normal for you, so if you start feeling isolated or like you're not seeing friends and family as frequently as you'd like, then something might be amiss. Pay attention to the comments from your nearest and dearest as well. Sometimes those who know us best might pick up on isolating behaviors faster than we can pick up on them on our own.

12. TAKING OFFENSE (TOO EASILY)

If every social interaction leaves you feeling hurt, annoyed or stepped on, it might be a sign you're feeling vulnerable because you're emotionally strained. When we are exhausted or feeling raw, every comment can come off as offensive or harsh, even if it was unintended. If you feel like everyone is frustrating you or hurting your feelings, you might need a break.

SPIRITUAL SYMPTOMS

13. DESTRUCTIVE HABITS

When we're trying to keep up with everything, we can develop bad habits and rely on coping behaviors that are damaging to our bodies, minds and souls. Using drugs, drinking too much, and even overspending can become addictive. When this happens, it's time to take a step back to realize that we're often using these quick-fixes to try to make ourselves feel better, rather than addressing the stress at hand.

14. SKIPPING SPIRITUAL TIME

Whatever your faith, if you're skipping church or spiritual time simply because you feel you don't have time, try to pause and reassess priorities. Time spent on your spiritual health is some of the most important time we can spend, and while it might not feel "important" in the moment, you'll feel much better when you revamp your schedule and regain some peace.

15. FEELING GUILT OR FEELING DISTANT FROM GOD

If you're constantly wracked with a sense of guilt or a feeling that something is missing, or if you're just avoiding prayer because you feel you might be unworthy or not enough—it's truly time to reach out. When you feel that distance, it means you are pulling away from God, not the other way around. Remember God loves us not because we are worthy, but because HE is.

PRACTICAL SYMPTOMS

16. MISSING APPOINTMENTS AND EVENTS

If you're unable to keep appointments and commitments because you either can't keep track or you just keep forgetting, your calendar is probably too full. Really look it over and think about what items you can scale back on or say no to. Check out the post, [10 Things You Can Take Off Your Calendar](#), for some practical tips on how to take your calendar back.

17. MISTAKES AT WORK

Many times, our busy personal lives can spill over into our work lives. If you're taking on too much outside of the office, you might find yourself unfocused or unable to handle as much at work. Conversely, if you're taking on too much at work and you find you're unable to let it go when you're home, it's probably time to refocus your work/life balance.

18. FINANCIAL PROBLEMS—OVERSPENDING AND LATE BILLS

When we're stressed, finances can seem insurmountable. Not only do we spend to cope with stress (it's easier to go out to eat than to fix dinner; it's easier to buy a gift than to take the time to make something), but we can also find ourselves avoiding our bills and falling behind. It can become a vicious cycle. Get a handle on your budget and work to get things under control so you can address your stress.

19. A MESSY HOME

If you feel you're constantly running around and you never have time to clean your house, let alone relax in it, it's time to re-prioritize. A messy, disorganized home can add to the chaos of our lives, as it becomes a place of stress rather than a sanctuary from the world around us. Organize your home so you can count on it as a retreat, rather than a place of increased stress.

20. FALLING BEHIND IN SCHOOL

Our children feel the pressure of our stress as well. Have your kids fallen behind on assignments because you haven't had time to go over homework or help? Are they struggling because of too many evening extracurricular activities, lessons and clubs? Kids can get just as stressed out as adults and childhood should be a time of creativity and growth, not stress and deadlines. Help your kids get their stress under control and make sure your stress isn't spilling over onto them.

By identifying these signs and symptoms of stress, we can better head it off before it takes over our lives. Remember: life is short! It should be joyful and fun (not miserable drudgery). Give yourself time to appreciate the beauty in day-to-day activities and let go of the pressure to do it all!



HEALTH

IS A STATE OF *body*

WELLNESS

IS A STATE OF *being*

— J. STANFORD

With 22
inflammation-fighting
recipes for clearer skin,
better digestion, and a
thriving thyroid



the
**WELLNESS
PROJECT**

How I Learned to Do Right by My Body,
Without Giving Up My Life

PHOEBE LAPINE

do^{ing} it scared

book of the month

The Wellness Project

by Phoebe Lapine

Executive Summary

JESSICA BOWMAN



After she was diagnosed with an autoimmune disease in her early twenties, Phoebe Lapine felt overwhelmed by her doctor's strict protocols and confused when they directly conflicted with information on the bestseller list.

After experiencing mixed results and a life of deprivation that seemed unsustainable at best, she adopted 12 of her own wellness directives—including eliminating sugar, switching to all-natural beauty products, and getting in touch with her spiritual side—to find out which lifestyle changes truly impacted her health for the better.

The Wellness Project is the insightful and hilarious result of that year of exploration—part memoir and part health and wellness primer (complete with 20 healthy recipes), it's a must-read not just for those suffering from autoimmune disease, but for anyone looking for simple ways to improve their health without sacrificing life's pleasures.

Why you should read it:

Phoebe Lapine imparts so much wisdom in an entertaining, non-preachy way. You'll come away with many realistic action items for how to take back your health and live a life you love.

Phoebe explains concepts in easy-to-understand terms and includes plenty of humor and pop culture references along the way. The information provided in *The Wellness Project* helps guide the reader towards their individual goals and teaches them what is the best investment of money and time to manage a sustainable healthy lifestyle and pursue an overall better well-being.

In her recipes, Lapine always finds a refreshing balance between foods that are both healthy and comforting. *The Wellness Project* takes the same approach to finding some middle ground in all facets of our lives. This insightful book gives readers a road map for finding that same middle ground in all aspects of our lives.

If you are feeling overwhelmed, like you can't maintain a healthy lifestyle in this fast-food world in which we live, *The Wellness Project* is for you!

6 EASY WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH

TIPS AND TRICKS TO IMPLEMENT IN YOUR LIFE RIGHT NOW

RUTH SOUKUP

We all want to be healthy right? Every year, maybe even every Monday, we vow that this is the year or week that we're going to start walking every day...or drink less coffee...or eat less processed foods. But, then life gets in the way.

Maybe you're dragging at 3 pm and reach for that latte. Maybe shuttling your kids to this practice and that game leaves no time for you to get outside and walk. Or maybe you're starving and the only food around is out of a vending machine.

So how do you create a healthy lifestyle when you're already SO overwhelmed?

The trick is to make small, consistent changes over time. After about ninety days those changes will become routine and eventually a lifestyle. Small changes can include things like taking more steps each day, having an extra glass of water, going to bed a half an hour earlier, or using real ingredients rather than packaged or processed food.

But a healthy lifestyle isn't just about food and exercise.

Whole health means caring for your whole self: mind, body, and spirit. Each facet of who you are is inextricably connected, and the strength of one can be used to bring health and healing to the weakness of another. Socrates said: The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new.

What do you want to build?

Instead of focusing on what you're doing wrong, or how you want to change, take a minute to recognize where you're already strong. Are you strong-willed or stubborn? Do you excel at spreadsheets or organization? Do you love getting people together? Whatever strengths you possess, utilize those to help you build and achieve your health goals!

Call on your mental toughness when your body wants to quit. Your organizational expertise might be just what you need in order to strategize and implement a plan for progress. Embrace the party planner in you to create fun, accountability as well as connect with people who have common goals. Creating a healthy lifestyle can't be all work or it will never last. You already have something solid to start with; you just need to harness it!

Here are six ways that will get you started on making that healthy lifestyle a habit:

#1: MOVE MORE

You already know that in order to be healthy, you must move, and moving means at least some form of exercising. But, maybe you don't know where to start or how to do it, or you're afraid you'll get injured or look stupid. Time is limited and excuses are plentiful, but we don't need to tell you that. The bottom line is that exercise is movement. Whether it's going for a walk or running a marathon, every time you move more than you normally do, it counts. Take the stairs instead of the elevator, park farther away in the parking lot, or use resistance bands to increase your strength. Small changes add up over time. Getting some sort of step tracker, like a Fitbit, helps tremendously to see how much you are moving each day! Doctors recommend hitting at least 10,000 steps per day to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

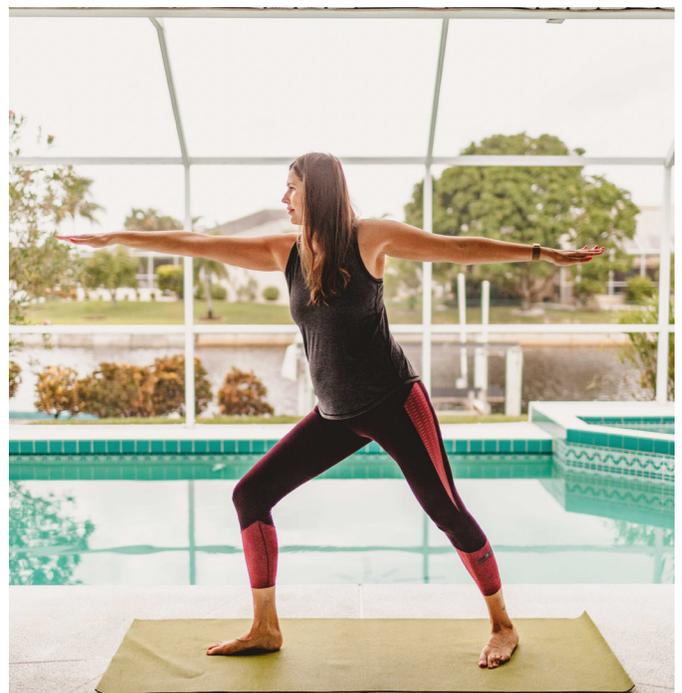
But don't stop there. Make it fun! Go on a hike with friends, try kayaking or sunrise yoga, or take a dance or martial arts class. There is no hard rule that exercise means you have to run 5 miles each day or tether yourself to the elliptical machine to count. Just move more than you did before. If you need help getting started (and are short on time), we love The Body Coach on YouTube. His 15-20 minute workouts are a perfect way to fit in a workout during a busy day.

#2. TRAIN YOUR BRAIN

Developing healthy routines is vital to long-term success. Henry Ford said: "Whether you think you can or you think you can't, you're right." Once or twice a week, turn off the TV or computer and try something a little more challenging. Do a puzzle, read a book, take a class or learn a new skill. If you always do the same things and think the same ways, you'll never grow. Those patterns can become limiting or even debilitating.

Develop a habit of trying new things, challenging long-held beliefs, and expanding your realm of possibility. You'll train your brain to see change as a challenge—a good and fun thing—rather than a punishment. You'll be amazed at all the things you CAN do.

And let's say one of your health goals is to run a half-marathon, you'd start training by first running a block, then running two and then pretty soon you're running



a mile and then two—the key is baby steps. You are training both your body and your mind to believe that you can really do it!

#3. PRIORITIZE SLEEP

Two-thirds of people suffer from sleep problems. And, it makes sense that if you're tired, it will be next to impossible to find the desire or energy to make positive, healthy choices in your life. One simple thing you can do to prioritize sleep is to create a sleep schedule. Turn off electronic devices two hours before bedtime, take a hot bath, drink a cup of non-caffeinated tea, or read a book. And, if you are tired, just go to bed! A lot of us fight through tiredness to finish our Netflix marathon or read just one more page, but if you are tired, just allow your head to hit the pillow and close your eyes, even if it is earlier than your normal bedtime.

#4. CHOOSE YOUR FOOD (AND CHOOSE WISELY)

When it comes to eating, no one is perfect and there are deeply ingrained patterns and belief systems connected to food. Instead of focusing on the next fad diet or labeling food bad or good, just aim for awareness. Replace “I should” with “I choose.” So instead of: “I should eat more vegetables,” it’s “I choose (or don’t choose) to eat more vegetables.” This language puts you in control of your choice.

And, if it's too tempting to snag a pop-tart in the morning or a handful of chocolate at night, make the choice to stop buying your triggers. Stock your pantry and refrigerator with healthy food options instead. Prepare a few things like hard-boiled eggs, roasted vegetables, or quinoa, and keep whole food (non-processed) snacks on hand so you're prepared when you get hungry. If eating whole, non-processed food is confusing or challenging, just check the ingredient list on your food, making sure it includes less than 5 items, and you can read and understand exactly what those items are!

#5. MANAGE STRESS

In addition to food and exercise, a healthy lifestyle requires learning how to effectively manage stress. We all have it, but it's how you manage your stress that matters. For a healthy lifestyle, it's important to develop positive coping mechanisms for routine stress in your life. This includes quiet time and visualization, and stress-busting activities like yoga, strength training, and cardiovascular exercise.

You must also find ways to handle the stressors that come up without warning. For example, after a frustrating phone call with a friend or family member you might need to run up and down the stairs or around the block to burn off the anger, or close your eyes and take three deep, calming breaths. Check your perspective. If it won't matter six months from now, then it's probably not worth getting worked up about now. Finally, keep a gratitude journal. When you focus on all the positive people and things you have to be grateful for, it helps limit the stress caused by wishing things were different.



Develop a habit of trying new things, challenging long-held beliefs, and expanding your realm of possibility. You'll train your brain to see change as a challenge—a good and fun thing—rather than a punishment. You'll be amazed at all the things you CAN do.



#6. IMPROVE RELATIONSHIPS

Did you know that the five people you spend the most time with influence who you are? That means that your social network is extremely important. If you spend time with positive, encouraging, uplifting people who love you and are there for you – that positivity will translate into your life, beliefs, and actions.

Invite people into your circle who aren't necessarily similar to you but share traits that you think are important, like honesty. Social psychologist Nathan DeWall says you must “share a similar level of comfort in getting close to people.” If you crave a deep and intimate friendship, then someone who only desires a shallow or superficial relationship isn't going to be a good fit. We've all been in a relationship that felt one-sided or off. Chances are they weren't a bad person, they just desired something different than you did.

Similarly, make sure you're building face-to-face relationships as well as virtual ones. Go meet your neighbor. Challenge yourself to meet a friend for lunch or coffee instead of only relying on Internet conversations or text messages. Spending time with people in real life is refreshing and rewarding, and will remind you how important face to face conversations are.

A healthy lifestyle is a lifetime process. If you can identify your strengths, and find the courage to start small, you can begin building something amazing today. Each day, push yourself forward in one area of life. Move more, train your brain, prioritize sleep, choose your food, manage stress, and improve your relationships. While there's no one path to creating a healthy lifestyle, there is yours. And that is a worthy journey.

FREE
TRAINING

reclaim
YOUR
sanity



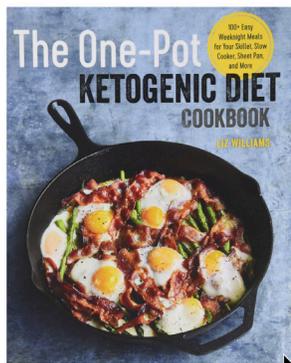
Now is the perfect time to **press the reset button** on your life and **take back control** of your busy schedule!

Join Ruth for a fun and lively **online training** that will have you ready to **tackle your to-do list** with a whole new sense of **purpose & motivation**.

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RECOMMENDED RESOURCES



THE ONE POT KETOGENIC DIET COOKBOOK BY LIZ WILLIAMS
AVAILABLE AT AMAZON AND MAJOR RETAILERS

Figuring out what to make on busy nights can sometimes seem impossible - especially if you're trying to follow the ketogenic diet. *The One-Pot Ketogenic Diet Cookbook* makes it easy to keep keto on the table every day of the week with family-friendly, one-pot meals for your skillet, slow cooker, sheet pan, stock pot, and more. With recipes ready to eat in under 45 minutes, this ketogenic diet cookbook is your go-to guide for setting the stress of staying in ketosis aside.

OPRAH'S SUPERSOUL CONVERSATIONS PODCAST:

AVAILABLE ON SPOTIFY, ITUNES AND ALL OTHER PLATFORMS

Awaken, discover and connect to the deeper meaning of the world around you with SuperSoul. Hear Oprah's personal selection of her interviews with thought-leaders, best-selling authors, spiritual luminaries, as well as health and wellness experts. All designed to light you up, guide you through life's big questions and help bring you one step closer to your best self.



EPISODE 40 ON THE DO IT SCARED® PODCAST:

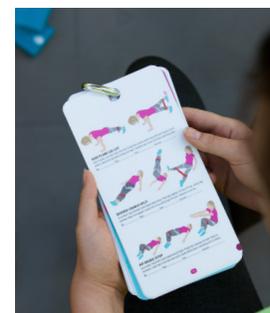
LISTEN TO THE PODCAST AT DOITSCARED.COM

Nagina struggled to lose weight as a busy mom with a demanding career and a lot of travel. Finally, fed up with the situation, she resolved to do something about it. She ultimately lost 40 pounds, but that was just the beginning! Her passion for health and wellness has led her to develop her own weight loss system, which she teaches at Masala Body. Her wisdom isn't limited to weight loss, but instead extends into finding the motivation to go after your goals, and learning to love the skin you're in.

CORE44 TRAINING CARDS:

AVAILABLE AT COR44.COM/PERSONAL-TRAINING-CARDS/

COR44™ is devoid of complicated choreography, typical photography and imagery, and prohibitive costs of entry. We are dedicated to building confidence in real women, and helping them design a life they love. Our means to this end is a regimen that is not daunting, but practical, inspiring, and, of course, effective. COR44 Personal Training Cards take the what-to-do, and the how-to, and put them directly into YOUR hands, giving you everything you need to begin. Our goal is to help you find your strength so you can use it to design your life.



HOW TO FIT IN MORE FITNESS

HOW TO GET IN SHAPE WHEN YOU'RE SHORT ON TIME

RUTH SOUKUP

Ugh. Exercise.

Am I the only one who completely dreads the thought of working up a sweat? And because I dislike it so much, it is easy to convince myself that I am just too busy to worry about working out. Fitness is for people who don't have anything better to do, right?

But the sad reality is that as I get older, I am noticing more and more that it is just not as easy to manage my weight as it used to be. Furthermore, when I get stressed out, I tend to be more susceptible to illness. And I don't think I'm alone here! The reality is that stress damages the immune system, causing us to feel somewhere between crummy and awful.

But the antidote to stress? Movement. Getting physical exercise and fitting in extra fitness when you can keeps you mentally and physically fit.

Plus, even if you don't think exercise makes a huge difference in your weight loss endeavors, sometimes just the effort of getting in some physical activity can help you get into "fitness mode." You're more likely to make healthier choices and stay in the mindset if you're already "being good."

So, what's a busy mom to do? How do we fit a little more fitness into our busy lives? The thought of finding a gym class, finding a sitter for two hours, getting dressed in gym clothes, driving there and back...it's laughable for most of us. It's just not realistic.

I read a book a couple of years ago that completely changed my perspective on exercise. It was called *No Sweat* by Michele Segar, and it talked about the science of motivation when it comes to exercise. There were two lessons in the book that changed everything for me.

First, Segar explained that if we want to make exercise a part of our life, there has to be an immediate reward. Thus, if it feels good and we are enjoying ourselves, do it, and if it doesn't feel good, stop and do something else. Second—and this lesson was huge—EVERYTHING COUNTS.

In my own life, these two lessons were completely transformative! You see, I had it in my head that in order for a

workout to “count,” it had to be painful and I had to work up a sweat. Thus, I would try to force myself to run in the morning, but then end up dreading it and somehow always find a reason to not go. (Usually—I have too much work to do!)

So how can we fit in more fitness to our already busy lives? Try these tips:

GET EFFICIENT

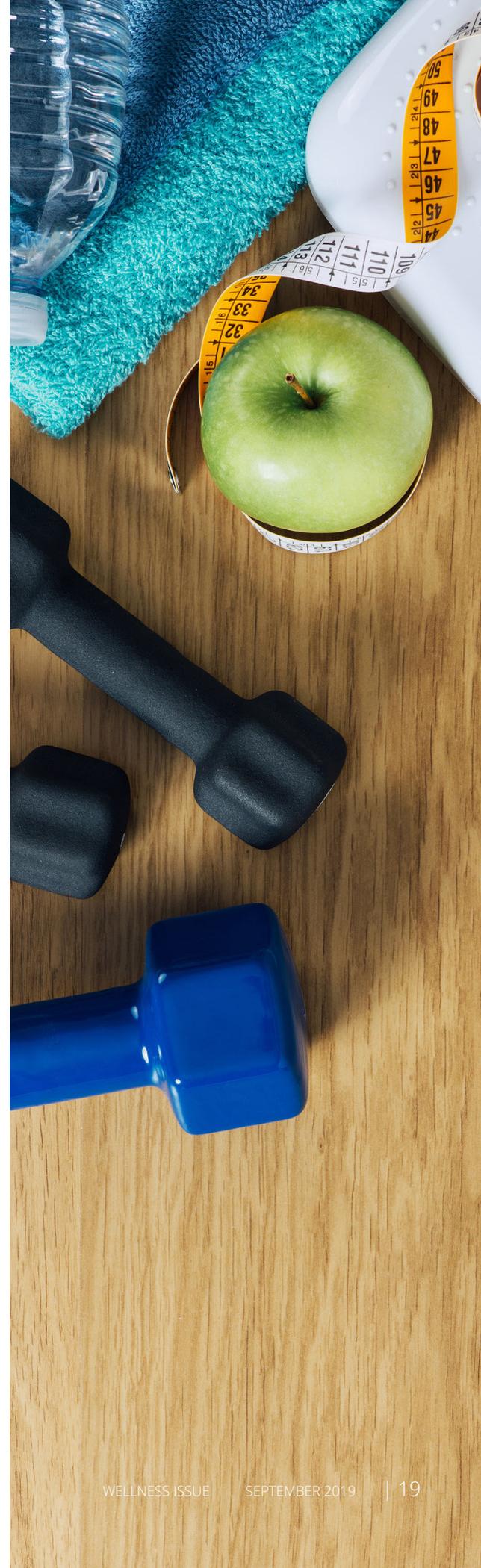
Figure out what exercise will give you the most bang for your fitness buck. For example, while an hour-long yoga class across town might sound heavenly, a 30-minute sweat session with a DVD might be more realistic and burn more calories to boot. HIIT workouts (High Intensity Interval Training) are quite popular and it’s easy to fit in an interval or two when you have a small window of time. Check out A HIIT timer app to help guide you.

Bonus: studies have now shown that just a few minutes of intense exercise can outweigh or equal longer periods of moderate exercise. So don’t be afraid to fit in ten minutes here and there throughout the day!

DO WHAT YOU LOVE

Some of us are born to run, while others prefer to dance the night away. Find an exercise you love to do and it won’t feel like drudgery. If there’s something you were interested in as a child—like softball—sign up for a community league. If you enjoy the solace of running or walking, then make it your go-to exercise. Adventurers might enjoy hiking, kayaking or even just yardwork. As long as you do it with intention and a mindful approach, you can make almost any “work” or “play” beneficial to your fitness.

After reading Segar’s book, I realized that while I don’t at all enjoy running, I do enjoy walking, especially when I can listen to audiobooks along the way. Now my morning walk is my absolute favorite part of the day, and I almost never miss it. In fact, I usually can’t wait to get out of bed so I can get going!





MAKE IT EASY

Here's the deal: Nike, Reebok, Adidas...all these exercise clothing and equipment companies would like you to believe you need an entire wardrobe of active wear, a different pair of shoes for each activity, and cutting edge equipment tailored to your body type.

In reality, this just complicates things and gives us another excuse to put it off. Lace up your good ol' sneakers and go. Throw on a t-shirt and your husband's basketball shorts and hit the pavement, treadmill or gym. Yes, it can be motivating to have cute workout gear, but most of it's not necessary. If there's something you'd like to try, consider renting equipment until you find out if the sport floats your boat.

GO TO THE PARK

Not only is the playground great for your kids, but it can be great for adults as well. Climb on the monkey bars, walk up and down the equipment, and push your kiddos in the swings. Do some squats as you lift your kids onto the toys and get interactive. Going to the park should be about playing, not about sitting on a bench and watching. Not only will your kids love it, but you just might have fun, too!

FIND A FRIEND

Enlist an accountability buddy to help you stay on track with your fitness goals. It's even better if that friend also likes to work out with you or is willing to sign up for a class or two. It's much harder to bail when you know your girlfriend is depending on you to be there. If you prefer to work out alone, consider signing up for an occasional race or event that you can do together to mark your progress.

SCHEDULE IT

Just like any goal, making your fitness time-bound helps you stay on track. If you don't put your activities on your calendar and take control of your schedule, you'll end up shoving them off and onto the bottom of your to-do list. Just like an important meeting or something you'd do for your spouse or kids, put your exercise right there on your schedule and stick to it! If something comes up, move it to another time, but don't skip it.

KEEP IT INTERESTING

One reason people quit making fitness a priority? Boredom. If you're doing the same thing over and over, running the same route and doing the same activities, it doesn't feel like a challenge. Instead, mix things up! Try a different route (use MapMyRun for ideas), set goals, and try to push yourself a little farther, faster or harder. Add some more weight to your lifting, more time to your planking, or new moves to your yoga routine.

WALK THE KIDS TO SCHOOL

Mornings can be a challenge, but if your kids walk to school, try walking with them. If you want to avoid the chaos of the drop-off line of cars, park a few buildings over or down the street and get a little walk in with your children before they go to class. You won't feel as frustrated as you would when you're waiting behind another mom on her cell phone, plus, you'll have a moment to connect with your kids before they start their day. Chances are, it won't even add much extra time to your routine, since you'd already spend it in the carpool lane.

PACE DURING THE GAME

If you're a soccer mom (or a dance, swimming, or piano mom), try to fit in some steps and exercise during lessons or games. Rather than scrolling through Pinterest in the parking lot or watching from the sidelines, walk around the field or building and get in some extra movement. You'll be close enough to cheer and be supportive, but you'll still fit in your exercise!

USE A FITNESS TRACKER

Fitness trackers are all the rage these days and for good reason: they help us measure our progress and goals. If you have a step goal each day, it can be immensely satisfying to look at your tracker and see you've hit your target. Fitness trackers can be as simple as an analogue pedometer or as complex as the latest smartwatch. Some track your heart rate, pace, distance, sleep, and calories burned, while others simply count your steps. Either way, find the one that works for you and start tracking your way to your goals!

TRY AN APP

There are a slew of fitness apps available, from Charity Miles (where corporate sponsors give a few cents to charity each time you work out) to MyFitnessPal to Fit Radio (which creates kick-butt music playlists for your workout). If you're looking for something really different, there's Zombies, Run!, an app that puts you in the middle of a "zombie attack" story. There's also Pact, which allows you to wager money on whether or not you'll keep your fitness goals (pretty darn motivating), and there's 7-Minute Workout from Johnson & Johnson, which provides great, short workouts you can fit in any time.



One reason people quit making fitness a priority? Boredom. If you're doing the same thing over and over, running the same route and doing the same activities, it doesn't feel like a challenge. Instead, mix things up!

SAY YES TO PLAY

The next time you hear, “Mommy, will you play with me?”—say yes. Get down on the floor and play. Run around, chase your kids, play tag and hide-and-go-seek, go for a bike ride, or climb up to the treehouse. If your kids want to go to the trampoline park or the rock climbing wall, give it a whirl! Try the batting cages or mini-golf on family night and don’t stand still in between turns. Play can be one of the simplest and most fun ways to fit in exercise, and your children will be absolutely delighted to have mommy join in on the fun!

“RUN” ERRANDS

The next time you have a few errands to run around town, park the car and literally RUN errands (or power walk). Plan your route so you can hit all of your destinations (the bank, the pharmacy, the library) and then walk it out. Forgoing the turmoil of finding parking and driving around in traffic can actually save you time and stress. Enjoy the sites and sounds of your town as you run your various errands and cross items off of your to-do list.

WALK WITH FRIENDS

Next time a friend wants to meet for coffee or lunch, ask them if you can meet at a park and walk around instead. Even walking through the mall or a museum can be a great way to fit in some more steps. You’ll probably feel more productive and engaged in your conversation than you would simply sitting around at Starbucks again. After you’ve done some walking, you’re both more likely to make good choices when it comes to food and drinks. After



all, you don't want to undo your healthy choices!

GO FOR A BIKE RIDE

Have fun with your family and go for a bike ride or a hike along some trails. Yes, it can feel a tad dorky when you're all in helmets, riding along a path, but it's a great way to instill the value of fitness and health in our children by showing them that their parents make exercise and movement a priority. Plus, there's something really fun about riding a bike. It takes you back to your childhood—feeling the wind on your face and the sun at your back—it hardly feels like exercise at all.

EXERCISE BETWEEN COMMERCIALS

When you're watching your favorite show, commit to exercising in between commercials. If you have a DVR or if you're watching on Netflix, make it a goal to do five minutes of exercise in between each episode. You can even play a game where you mix up what you do according to what the characters on the show are doing. For example, every time *Law & Order* transitions to the courtroom or each time a contestant is eliminated on *Dancing with the Stars*, you have to do 25 crunches or ten reps on each arm with your free weights.

WORK OUT AT WORK

Redecorating your office is no small task, but if you plan on upgrading your desk, consider switching to a standing or treadmill desk, as opposed to sitting. If the option of a new desk isn't in the cards, make it a goal to get up every hour and walk for five minutes, even if it's just to the water cooler. Similarly, if you need to get up to talk to a coworker, walk to their office, rather than calling or IM-ing. If you work from home, stand up every time you take a phone call. Spend your lunch hour taking a walk around the block and try to focus on ways to add movement throughout your workday.

DON'T GO FOR CONVENIENCE

The next time you're at the grocery store, go for a basket rather than a cart (if at all possible). Park away from the entrance and walk a little farther. Try to keep up a good pace while you shop and focus on deliberate steps and lifting as you go.

Similarly, when you're cleaning your house, push the furniture out of the way, stretch and climb, and make multiple trips up and down the stairs. Rather than carrying all your groceries in at once, go back and forth to the car several times to get in some more steps.

Fitness is a lifelong goal and focus. It's important that all of us make our bodies and health a priority. Part of living well is being healthy enough to enjoy it. Fit in fitness wherever you can and make long-term fitness your goal!



Kati Brown

do^{ing} it scared

story of the month



Practicing self-care can be the difference between me having a productive day and falling into a lengthy Netflix binge. As a work-at-home-mom with two boys and an online business to run, I must find small ways to recharge that don't take huge chunks out of my work or family time.

Quiet Time.

I get up early and take one hour just for me before my house wakes up every morning. This is a method I learned from *The 5am Club* by Robin Sharma. I exercise for 20 minutes, usually cardio or calisthenics. I spend 20 minutes planning my day/week with my Daily Do It sheets and my planner. The last 20 minutes is for expanding my mind by journaling, brainstorming, or sketching. Getting up this early is downright hard, but now I feel scattered all day if I miss my hour of quiet in the morning.

Food & Drink.

I do my best to follow two wellness rules with food: 1. Eat something green every day that isn't a gummy bear. The requirement inspires me to make better overall food choices, like salads or smoothies, to get my green food for the day. 2. Stay above "water zero." Dehydration causes lethargy and headaches, so drinking enough water is important for health and mood. If each ounce of water is a +1, then each ounce of coffee or alcohol is -1. Even with my love of coffee, I make sure to drink enough water to tip the scales back into the positive after every cup.

Just A Moment.

Lastly, I find one small activity every day to do that recharges me. I drink a coffee in the window seat, do my nails, or watch a TV show with my husband. The trick to these little moments is to consciously choose it to be a recharging moment and acknowledging it as such. Many times, they are my reward for accomplishing my "one thing" for the day, and they give me both my recharging moment and a sense of achievement.

Do you have a Doing It Scared story to share? We would love to hear and possibly feature it! If you would like to share your Doing It Scared story, please reach out and send it to maggie@ruthsokup.com

WE ASKED, YOU ANSWERED

WHAT DOES WELLNESS MEAN TO YOU AND HOW DO YOU PRACTICE THAT?

Mary: Wellness is more than physical, it's mental and emotional too... I know physical is important, but if I don't have mental and emotional wellness too, physical is nothing... as for how I practice, I do daily devotions, and make sure to take time out for me... physical wellness involves me chasing my 3 boys around



Kathy: Wellness is extremely important to me. I know I should exercise more but I do try to watch what I eat on a daily basis



Helene: Eating clean and healthy foods (lots of veggies!) and abstaining from bad foods mostly. Exercising to the extent a person can (e.g., I can't run any more due to a hip thing, so I use a treadmill, swim and play tennis). Practicing self-care regularly and being aware of issues that may need to be resolved with professional help (emotional and mental health).



LaKrisha: Starting the day with a grateful heart. Quiet time spent talking to God about my concerns and my people. Some kind of movement, doesn't have to be hard core. Water. Minimum amount of sleep, which I'm still working on.



Sarah: For me, wellness starts with self-compassion.



Amanda: Oh, man, different things at different times. Sometimes it just means escaping into a good novel for a while. Right now it has meant resigning from my job and setting myself up to having the flexibility my family and I need at the moment in order to be well. I guess at the centre of it is the question: What do I - and my family - need at the moment? What is best for us as individuals and as a unit? But it is also making sure I eat even when I don't feel like it, that I take that extra nap or the weekend off when I need it...



Jess: This is one of my favorite topics! Wellness is taking care of my health from all aspects - mental, emotional, physical and spiritual. Wellness is listening to my body, being honest about my needs, loving myself as I am even if I want to improve, and making choices and practicing habits each day that support my health.



Kathy: To me, wellness means being in good physical condition, at a healthy weight with good habits - eating clean, drinking water, and exercising.



Sharon: To me - Wellness is when I can perform those things needing to get done with enjoyment, gratitude and acceptance of myself where I'm at on my way to where I'm going.



Carrie: To me wellness means being physically and mentally sound. Not only do I exercise my body regularly, I also try to stay mentally positive by practicing my gratitude and positive thinking on a daily basis.



Gina: Wellness is feeling grateful for what I have, and not getting caught in the overwhelm.



PRACTICAL APPLICATION

What does **wellness** mean to me?

Am I currently **prioritizing** wellness in my life?

If not, what needs to **change** to make wellness a priority?

PANTRY STAPLES

WELL STOCKED KITCHEN CHECKLIST

PANTRY

- oatmeal
- cereal
- powdered or shelf-stable nut milk
- crackers
- canned tuna
- canned chicken
- canned tomatoes
- canned soups –tomato & cream-based
- broths
- instant rice
- dried pasta
- beans
- salad dressings
- mayonnaise
- mustard
- vinegar
- red wine vinegar
- balsamic vinegar
- olive oil
- vegetable oil
- soy sauce
- ketchup
- barbecue sauce
- peanut butter
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

- jelly or jam
- canned tomatoes
- jarred or canned olives
- canned corn
- roasted peppers (jarred)
- apple sauce
- fruit cups
- granola bars or bites
- nuts: almonds, walnuts, mixed nuts
- boxed cake mix
- pasta sauce (cream & tomato variety)
- tomato paste
- boxed pastas (like hamburger helper or Mac & Cheese)
- baking staples (if you bake frequently)
- chocolate chips
- cocoa powder
- sugar
- red & white wine
- salt & pepper
- spices
- potatoes
- garlic & onions
- couscous
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

REFRIGERATOR

- butter
- milk
- eggs
- rotisserie chicken
- parmesan cheese
- carrots
- lemons
- pizza dough
- plain yogurt
- dijon mustard
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

FREEZER

- peas
- spinach
- bread
- bacon
- shrimp
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

