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Measuring Progress

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Importance of Measuring Your Progress


- Recognizing and acknowledging progress, even when subtle, is a key part of staying on track. When our hard work produces desirable outcomes, this motivates us to continue putting in the effort.
- When we fail to take time to self-reflect on our progression, we often may not feel like our efforts are not yielding results, which can be very unmotivating.
- To stay motivated, and see how far you have truly come, you should have more than one way to measure your progress, and doing this often.

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SELF-ASSESSMENTS

- Measuring:
 - Physical Fitness
 - Physical Changes
 - Energy Level
 - Improved Sleep Quality/Quantity
 - Improved Mental Performance: Cognition and Mood
 - Coping Mechanism/Behavior Change
 - Lab Results




Self Assessment

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Physical Fitness

- Physical activity is a key component of a healthy lifestyle.
- Monitor your physical activity > know your physical fitness level.
 - Focus on your own improvement, not an expectation of where you 'should be'
- As your physical activity increases, your physical fitness will improve.
 - Your functional capability increases, and you feel more energetic.
 - Routine tasks, like climbing stairs, become easier to do without fatigue.


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Physical Fitness: Heart Rate



- Your heart rate can be used as an indicator of physical fitness.
- Your heart is a muscle and becomes stronger as you become more physically fit. This makes the heart more efficient, able to pump more blood with each beat. As a result, your resting heart rate decreases.

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Physical Fitness: How to Monitor Heart Rate

- The best time to take your resting heart rate is before you get out of bed in the morning.
 - Find you pulse wherever a large artery lies near the surface: at the temple, neck, wrist, and on the chest near the hear.
 - Count your pulse for a full 60 seconds or for 30 seconds and multiply by two.
 - Do this over the course of three mornings and take the average of the three values.
- To measure your progress, you can monitor your heart rate on a monthly basis, note this down, and see the progress made regarding your heart's efficiency.

USE THE CHART BELOW TO EVALUATE YOUR RESTING HEART RATE

	Beats Per Minute	
	Men	Women
Superior	Less than 48	Less than 53
Excellent	48-55	53-60
Good	56-65	61-70
Fair	66-79	71-84
Poor	80-90	85-95
Very Poor	Over 90	Over 95


*Note- A low resting heart rate is not always an indication that someone is highly fit. People who take certain medications, like beta-blockers for hypertension, may have a lower heart rate.

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Physical Fitness- Other Assessments

- There are several types of fitness:
 - cardiovascular endurance
 - Cooper test – distance covered in 12 minutes
 - Heart Rate during activity
 - muscular strength and endurance
 - Push-up test
 - Plank test
 - flexibility
 - Sit and reach test



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Physical Changes: Weight

- Assessing body weight (method: scale) the most common measure of progress.
- Regular weigh-ins can help you stay on track, but it's crucial to not get obsessed with the scale.
- Focusing only on weight dismisses all other measurements that validate progress as well.
 - Recognizing and acknowledging all progress, even if subtle, motivates us to continue putting in the effort. If we are only measuring our progression based on one factor, we often may feel like our efforts are not yielding results, which can be very unmotivating.

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Why weight should not be the sole factor of progress:


- Weight Fluctuates – a normal part of being a living organism!
 - Reasons for Fluctuation: Fluid retention, High sodium intake recently, Weighing at inconsistent times of the day/varying layers of clothes
- Muscle gain / Fat Loss
- It's normal to plateau during weight loss, so if you don't see the scale moving as quickly as you would like, focus on other things.
- Weighing too often and obsessively worrying about the number on the scale can lead to unhealthy habits, such as disordered eating and skipping meals, just to see the scale move.
 - This tends to cause more harm and may result in unwanted consequences: such as metabolism suppression, malnutrition or loss of muscle mass.

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Physical Changes: Body Circumference Measurements

- Another way to track your progress is to measure body circumferences.
- Common areas to measure inches lost:
 - Waist
 - Hip
 - Chest
 - Upper arm
 - Thigh
- Tips
 - Need a flexible measuring tape that doesn't stretch.
 - Obtain these measurements against bare skin
 - Do not compress skin
 - Measure in front of a mirror to help you position the tape.



UPPER ARM	Measure the circumference around the largest point on your upper arm above the elbow, with your arms relaxed by your side.
CHEST & BUST	Measure the circumference around your chest or bust and your back, at the end of an exhale. Measuring tape should be under the armpits, around your shoulder blades, and close to the nipple line.
UNDER CHEST & UNDER BUST	Measure the circumference around your ribs and your back, directly under your chest or bust, at the end of an exhale.
WAIST	Measure the circumference around the smallest point on your midsection, just above your navel, while relaxing your stomach muscles.
HIP	Measure the circumference at or under your hip bones, at the largest point, with your feet together, while relaxing your stance.
THIGH	Measure the circumference around the largest point on your upper thigh, while relaxing the leg muscle.

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MEASURING PROGRESS

PERSONAL PROGRESS CHART

Name: _____ Program Start Date: _____

Height: _____ inches

Measure	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date	Date
Weight (lbs.)							
Resting Pulse (beats per minute)							
Walking Test							
– Time (min/100)							
– Pulse (bpm)							
Waist (in.)							
Hip (in.)							
Chest (in.)							
Upper Arm (in.)							
Thigh (in.)							


Consider using a datasheet like this to obtain monthly measurements. Customize to what you are monitoring.

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Other Physical Changes

- Your clothes fit better than they used to
- Your skin looks better
- Improved diet may help reduce acne.
- You're in less pain (legs and lower back in particular)
- Physical activity is easier.



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Physical Fitness Progress


- You can do more of the things you love
- Ease of playing with your children or pets, working in your garden, or taking a brisk walk
- You've reached a fitness milestone or have noticed changes in your fitness levels
- More reps, heavier weights, and longer exercise sessions indicate that you're moving in the right direction.

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Other Changes

- Energy Level and Sleep
 - You have more energy
 - Your sleep has improved
- Improved Mental Performance: Cognition and Mood
 - Your mind is sharper
 - Your thinking skills are likely to improve- studies have shown weight loss is associated with better memory, increased attention span, and faster mental processing.
 - Improved Mood
 - Studies show a positive change in the severity of their depression symptoms after 5% percent weight loss

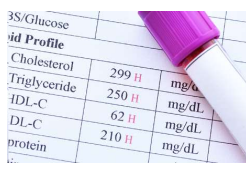


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Other Changes

- Coping Mechanism/Behavior Change
 - Your coping mechanisms are healthier. If you've used food to cope with stress in the past, you may notice you have retrained yourself to use healthier stress management techniques like exercise or mindfulness.
- Your medical markers/labs are improving
 - Blood pressure and blood sugar are improving.




Lipid Profile			
Cholesterol	299	H	mg/dL
Triglyceride	250	H	mg/dL
HDL-C	62	H	mg/dL
LDL-C	210	H	mg/dL
protein			mg/dL

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How to monitor these changes?

- Write it down!
 - Circumference every 30 days
 - List of goals "run x miles without stopping" to check things off
- Compare
 - Look at past lab levels compared to recent
 - If you track, what was your dietary recall when you first started compared to now
 - Take pictures! Store in private file on your phone if you desire.
- Monitoring progress will reassure you that the changes you've made are improving your health.



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Focus on Inches and You'll Win by a Mile

Most of us like to see progress right away. So, when we take baby steps and can't detect advancement, we abandon our efforts, thinking that we've failed. The truth is, measuring progress is often like watching grass grow. While it's difficult to detect movement on a daily basis, it's simple to see growth over time.

Focus on inches and you'll win by a mile.

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thank you!

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