

Try These 5 Daily Tips When You Don't Have Any Time for Fitness

“Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time” (Col. 4:5, ESV).

I just don't have time! Time ... or lack thereof, is the No. 1 excuse people give for avoiding exercise. The problem with this argument is that inactive people have just as much free time as people that exercise. We all have 24 hours in a day; how we prioritize and manage that time is a reflection of how we live out our lives in Christ.

Learning how to manage time does not come easy for most of us; it takes practice. Although time management may seem like a daunting task for many, it is an essential component to growing in faith and living out a healthy and fit Christ-centered life. In his letter to the Ephesians, the Apostle Paul had a clear and concise opinion regarding time management, “See then that you walk carefully, not as fools, but as wise men, making the most of the time because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is” (Eph. 5:15-17). Paul reminds us that as children of light; we are to be careful how we walk. Our walk as followers of Jesus is a methodical, step-by-step journey that we do not take lightly. We are encouraged to develop habits that positively reflect our lives lived out as followers of Jesus, including the wise use of perhaps our most precious resource: our time.

To try and resolve the “timeless” dilemma of “lack of time” many of us face daily, namely that we somehow always seem to run out of it before we get to the gym, we should start with an assessment of how we currently manage our time. If you

don't know where you are currently, it is hard to develop a plan to get to where you want to go. The bottom line is that we all need to find time for the important things in life. The questions then becomes "What are the most important things in my life? Caring for your own and your family's health should rank high in time-allocation; if not, seek the Lord for guidance. Seeking His guidance is always the first and most important step in life planning and time management.

Step 1: 24-Hour Journal

Keep a journal of your daily habits for several days. If you have never done this before, it will most certainly surprise you. Literally write down everything you do for 24 hours, down to the minute. If you need help, there are lots of good resources available to help you.

Step 2: Schedule Your Time

Now that you have a better idea of where "all the time goes," you can capture some of that precious time and block it off so you can use it to exercise. If you weren't able to find the time to exercise before, you likely will never find the time unless you schedule it. You literally need to block off time (for yourself, for Jesus) for exercise. If you don't do it for yourself, do it for Jesus, do it for your family.

Step 3: Find the Time

There is simply no excuse for not having enough time to be physically active. Take lack of time out of the equation or argument and start there. You may not have enough time to drive to the gym, park, get changed, exercise, shower and change and drive back ... But you most certainly have time to "move" throughout your day. There is a growing movement of active beings who believe the "ultimate gym" lies right outside your front door.

Step 4: Some Is Always Better than None

So you can't find a full 30 minutes during your day, break it up into 5-, 10- or 15-minute segments. Split workouts are just as effective as continuous workouts. Think micro-exercise versus macro-exercise. I literally have had people tell me that they don't exercise because they don't have an hour to lose. The sad news is that they lose either way, in fact more so by not taking the time to care for their bodies now regardless of the future holds. Moving is beneficial for our health, the more minutes of your life you spend moving versus sitting, the healthier you will be. Stop thinking of exercise in terms of time, start with just moving.

Step 5: Make a Faith and Fitness Connection

A stronghold describes a spiritual battle, " For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds" (2 Cor. 10:3-4). Our weapons are not physical, for our warfare is spiritual in nature and our power comes from God alone. When you can't find the energy to exercise or you absolutely can't find the time, go to God first. Our physical battles on earth must be dealt with spiritually first if we are to have any success in changing health behaviors. Use every possible way to exercise: Get up a few minutes early and take a brisk walk, use 15 minutes of your lunch hour to walk the stairs, and walk the dog or lift weights after work.

The good news is, there is always, always a way to find time to exercise as long as you include Jesus. {eo}

Scott Roberts, Ph.D. *is currently professor and chair of the Kinesiology Department at William Jessup University.*