

ASK THE TRAINER

QUESTION: *“Okay I can relate to this one. I use to run those mountain trails out in Utah moved to sea level which I understand is way less taxing on the heart & was unprepared for how little jogging a couple of miles would do for me after running the Mtn trails (don't even get me started on all this southern food and how that took me off course, the south needs to come with a warning label!) I want to get back in shape I do not however want to work 2 or 3 times as hard.....suggestions?”*

RESPONSE:

The south DOES “come with a warning label” :). Of course we “true southerners” try to keep it a secret so we can entice you would-be transplants. Are you smiling yet? I am.

Maybe these “suggestions” will help you in your quest to “get back in shape” without working “2 or 3 times as hard.”

- **Ease back into a fitness regime.** Don't jump back in with both legs churning and both arms flaying. I know you used to love to walk so let's use walking as an example: perhaps taking a morning or an evening walk is enough for the first week. Then work up to where you do two mornings or two evenings a week, then three. Eventually you build up to at least five days a week with the walk lasting for 30 minutes or more. Knowing you, I believe by this time the passion for being creative per intensity will be present and you are on your way.
- **Set realistic goals and write down what you want to accomplish.** You are a goal-oriented person so you know the value of making your goals two-fold: short term and long term so as to establish from the very beginning what you want to accomplish next week, next month, and one year from now. Be sure to record your goals and review them often. You would not have accomplished what you have in your education and personal life without this (clapping my hands to applaud you), so put what you already know about goal-setting into operation relative to getting back into shape without killing yourself. You know how to “pace” – so pace girl – pace. :)
- **Allot the time.** Set a regular workout time and stick with it as closely as possible. This will make exercise a lot easier since you will not be stressing over when to fit it in. Write it down in your “weekly planner” as a critical appointment if you have to, but even more importantly, etch it deep in your mind and heart. THIS IS YOUR TIME. Sure you are doing it for family and friends, but first and foremost you are doing it for yourself – it is time for you and unless there is an emergency don't let anything or anyone keep you from the appointment.

- **Add Variety.** Variety will insure “spice” or flavor to your health program and keep it from becoming stale or tasteless. Not only will it be important to be creative in your exercise program; it will also be imperative that you be creative in your nutrition program. Explore exercise routines and recipes for some that are adaptable to your needs or goals and then don’t be afraid to experiment. One of the best ways to avoid allowing exercise to be hard is to have fun, and adding spice or flavor will indeed help insure this.
- **Invite or “Coerce” (big smile) At Least One Other Person To Join With You On Your Fitness Journey.** There is strength in numbers and as the old saying kinda goes: “many hands make for lighter work.” So one of the ways to help insure that you will not be working 2 or 3 times harder is to allow or “force” (big smile again) someone else to help share the challenge. Sometimes making a pact with a family member or friend can carry you through a period when your own desire may need encouragement. Having a fitness partner can serve as a powerful reminder that you are not alone on your journey. It may also be that your positive attitude (and I know for a fact that you have one) and practice could serve as a form of encouragement to someone else who has struggled in the past and reluctantly caved in out of despair.

I hope this will help and maybe I will make it down to Florida sometimes and we can take a walk on the beach.

Dan