

# FM FORWARD MOVEMENT

# FITNESS REDEFINED

HOW DO  
YOU DEFINE  
STRENGTH?

## A FIT PREGNANCY

HOW TO MAINTAIN  
YOUR FITNESS  
LEVEL WHILE  
EXPECTING

## NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS?

HOW TO KEEP  
YOUR MOTIVATION  
THROUGHOUT  
THE YEAR



**AMBER  
DOBECKA**

FITNESS &  
NUTRITION COACH

**FINDING  
STRENGTH**  
IN ALL SEASONS



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**AMBER DOBECKA**

"ON THE COVER"

Amber Dobecka in action  
photographed by Audra Oden

# examining **STRENGTH**



Strength used to seem binary to me. Either you had strength or you didn't; and strength was defined by pull-ups, push-ups, and heavy weights. After having my third baby at home who was nearly 11lbs, I started to question my original definition. Maybe extraordinary events can define strength, and maybe even ordinary events can also define it. Do you need a competition trophy to know you went through a hell of a time and came out alive and better than ever on the other side? And what tests your body, your mind, and your sanity more than parenthood? Mental toughness is as much a test of strength as the best day at the gym. And I love the quote from John Welborn, "Mental toughness is the accumulation of a lot of not quitting." That is part of who we are and who we celebrate at Forward Movement.

In this issue, we feature Amber Do-becka who is absolutely rocking her nine-month pregnant bod. I would say instead of eating for two, she is sweating for two! She is such a delight and truly a light in the world. She teaches us the value of patience and inner strength. Amber embodies my previous definition of strength, but also this newer one as well. She found herself focusing too much on her outward look and instead turned her focus towards helping others. This change has catapulted her life in unexpected ways.

*Jaime  
Kimmons*

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**I am honored to have the opportunity to work with the best of the best out there in creating this issue for you. We at Forward Movement have a proclivity towards those who are on a journey of self-improvement: physically and mentally.**

We are featuring two Forward Movers who inspire us to become stronger, as they are pursuing their best possible selves. Both explain how raising their kids has become their "why" for exercising and taking the best possible care of themselves.

We haven't forgotten physical strength either. Marvel over how interminable discipline, fastidious technique, and incremental work have given our models their strong bodies. Learn about Cross-Fit, weight lifting, and even how to work out like an Army Ranger in our new section premiering in this issue called

"Work Out with a Hero".

I'm your new Editor-In-Chief, and I am honored to have the opportunity to work with the best of the best out there in creating this issue for you. We at Forward Movement have a proclivity towards those who are on a journey of self-improvement both physically and mentally. This issue is no different. We hope you are as inspired by our contributors as we are, and as always, Move Your Life Forward!





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# SAVE THE DATE

# FITposium 2017

## OCT 20-21 • PHOENIX, AZ



**AGE**

35

**LOCATION**

West St. Paul, MN

**OCCUPATION**

I am a psychotherapist specializing in working with athletes and women. I treated children for many years before my interest grew in adolescents and young athletes.

**FUN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF**

I use hypnosis to help my clients improve sports performance—yes hypnosis!

**HOBBIES**

Lifting and competing are my hobbies! I love to dance, and I attend a weekly adult gymnastics class. Learning how to do a flip as a grown up is a terrifying, yet fun experience.

**FUN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF**

I grew up riding and showing quarter and paint horses. I am a fun mix of Sri Lankan, Irish, and Dutch.



# MELISSA



**WE CHOSE YOU AS  
ONE OF OUR FORWARD  
MOVERS BECAUSE YOU  
INSPIRE US! WHAT KEEPS YOU  
MOTIVATED?**

My biggest supporters, my kids and my husband keep me motivated! They also give up a little to help support my interest in fitness-- early morning wake ups, waiting up for a good night, and coping with my short patience when I am carb cycling. This is very much a team sport, and my desire to make them proud helps keep me focused.

**YOU HAVE FOUR CHILDREN, EX-  
PERIENCED AN INTERNATIONAL  
ADOPTION, HAVE A CAREER, AND  
ARE A FITNESS PROFESSIONAL?  
HOW DO YOU HAVE TIME  
FOR ALL OF THAT?**

I have a very organized schedule! I work 40 hours a week and have a director that is very supportive of staff. There are certainly days that I work late, but for the most part I prioritize my health and well-being over another hour at work. My kids are a part of my gym community, so you will often see them in the kid's area with their homework out while mom lifts. I CrossFit and this allows me to maintain community and efficiency in my workouts. My husband is supportive of me as well, he offers thoughts on my routines and provides feedback on my progress. Every day I make the choice to stay on track. I believe that our lives are directed by a series of choices in which we have control. Even if the unpredictable happens, we still are in control of our response.

**HAS YOUR DEFINITION  
OF STRENGTH CHANGED  
OVER THE YEARS?**

Absolutely! For me, strength used to be about one's ability to lift heavy weight. After meeting the birth mothers of my two children that were adopted, that changed. These were two women who struggled to feed their children and care for themselves in a community that did not want to help them because they were single mothers. They fought for their children and made the biggest sacrifice they could. Being a strong advocate for my children and fighting for my patients is what being strong means. And caring for myself allows me to do this work.

**HAS HAVING CHILDREN CHANGED  
YOUR PERSPECTIVE OF BEING FIT?**

I think that having children has solidified the importance of being fit. Not only so that I can have a long and active life with them, but that they learn to care for themselves as well. I have learned so much from lifting. You learn to push through, see what your body and mind are capable of. Those are lessons that can't be matched anywhere else. Having my kids see their mom do this work will hopefully inspire them to push their bodies too.

**HOW DO YOU FIND  
TIME FOR GYM TIME?**

I make it a choice every day to find the time. I try to limit interruptions to my kids' and husband's day, so I will go early in the morning, right after work, or sometimes even over lunch. I try to look at the week ahead and plan rest days around the kids' activities.

Uncan



## WHEN DID YOU GET SERIOUS ABOUT FITNESS?

I did not become serious about fitness until I was 30. I was overweight, was taking a \$600 medication for Crohn's disease and could not maintain a pregnancy. I had three surgeries to address my fertility issues. I was depressed and my anxiety skyrocketed. I needed to do something and getting my diet in order was at the top of the list.

## WHAT INSPIRES YOU?

As a psychotherapist, my patients let me into their lives and share with me terrible hardships. They tell stories of abuse, suffering, and trauma. The courage they show by allowing themselves to be vulnerable, to trust me, and to put in the work in hope of changing their lives is very inspiring. Everything about their experience would tell them to run and hide, but they show up.

## WHAT TIPS WOULD YOU GIVE A MOM STRUGGLING TO GET BACK TO HER PRE-BABY BODY?

Find something that you enjoy doing. I tried running before I began lifting weight, and I hated it! My friends were runners, so I thought maybe I could get on board too. I tried other classes and finally found an awesome personal trainer. That helped get me on the right track. I loved how lifting weights made me feel. If you love doing it, it won't feel like work.

## ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD?

It is never too late to make a change. Your life could be completely different in a year, even in a month if you dare to do something different and make that choice every day.

## ANY INSPIRATION FOR OUR READERS?

You don't have to workout everyday, just today.









**WE LOVE THE MESSAGE YOU REPRESENT AND THE IMPACT YOU ARE MAKING IN THE WORLD, MARK. WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST MOTIVATOR?**

My wife, Rachael, and my children, Sydney and Gage keep me motivated and grounded everyday. Also, the pictures of the person that I used to be - the unhealthy, tired version of me. I don't ever want to be in that shape again. I want to live a life full of energy for myself and my family.

**HOW DID YOU GET INTO FITNESS?**

If I look back, there were three distinct periods in my life that got me into fitness. It all started with me deciding that I had to get my meals and food under control. That is where I met Kim Porterfield from Institute of Eating Management. She taught me how to properly fuel my body the correct way, how to eat clean, and how to eat according to my goals. After I had the basic understanding of nutrition, I was interested in getting the knowledge of weight training and building muscle. That is where Billy Jones from The Iron Den and John Fish with Extreme Physiques came into my life and taught me about weight lifting, bodybuilding, and, honestly, about controlling my emotions in my life. These three people were God send to me and I cannot ever thank them enough!

**MARK****PARTY**





## FAST facts

### AGE

41

.....

### LOCATION

Pearland, Texas

.....

### OCCUPATION

I am a personal trainer. I train clients at the Iron Den in League City and the Grind in Pearland. I specialize in functional training, endurance, and strength training for the youth athlete. I also train clients in general weight loss and educate them on the proper way to get healthy! But I LOVE training the kids, watching them grow, and succeed into collegiate athletes! I just started training full time a few years ago. Before then I was an operator/paramedic at one of the refineries.

.....

### HOBBIES

I have been a Paramedic/Firefighter for 18 years. So I love to train and get into some fires. I spend a lot of my free time with youth organizations being the Medic.

.....

### HOW MANY KIDS DO YOU HAVE

Two, I have a daughter, Sydney (17) and son, Gage (15).

.....

### FUN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF

My love for Jeeps...  
I own 3 of them!!

■





### **WHAT SORT OF NUTRITION THEORY DO YOU ABIDE BY?**

My nutrition and my body work better with a balanced diet. That includes protein, fats and carbs. Even when I am in contest prep mode, I work better balanced. But I also know that everybody is different, so I have seen success with ketosis, as well as macro counting. But when it comes to IIFYM, I believe in nutrient-based foods, not processed carbs or candies.

### **HOW DID HAVING CHILDREN CHANGE YOU?**

That is one of the main reasons I wanted to get healthier. I wanted to be around for them. I was headed down a dangerous road, and the way that I was abusing my body with bad choices, I wasn't going to be around very long.

### **HOW DO YOU MAKE TIME FOR BODYBUILDING?**

I simply make time. I schedule time to get into the gym, reminding myself that it is essential to my health.

Rachael helps me by pushing me and taking care of things to allow me the time I need to train.

### **WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE GOALS?**

I just want to set a good example for my children. I want to teach them that we only have one body on this earth and that we should take care of that body. And I want to show them how a healthy mindset will take you a long way, and it will make life so much more enjoyable.

### **I LOVE THE PHOTO OF YOU SETTING NUMBERS ON FIRE. WHAT DOES THAT MEAN TO YOU?**

My dear friend and photographer, Audra Oden, helped me come up with that. She is so creative. To me, it means that no matter what age you are, what weight you started at, or whatever you think is holding you from your goals, that it can be overcome. They are just numbers, they mean nothing! When you put your mind to it, you can crush those goals.

### **HAS YOUR PHILOSOPHY OF FITNESS CHANGED OVER THE YEARS?**

Yes, most definitely! I have learned that it is not all about the super heavy weights all the time. Yes, there are times that heavy weights are required, but now I really try to focus on the muscle. To keep the muscle group that I am working on constantly under tension and to keep total focus on that muscle. My body has been responding well. It seems the older I get, the less ego I have to have when it comes to weights.

### **WHAT TIPS WOULD YOU GIVE FELLOW DADS TRYING TO BALANCE FAMILY LIFE, WORK, AND FITNESS?**

Make time!!! Make time for yourself to keep your mind and body healthy. Make staying healthy a family event - enjoy nature, get outside, and stay active. You will set a great example for your children. You are their provider and their dad, so you need to do everything in your power to stay healthy and live a longer life for them.

### **ANY INSPIRATION FOR OUR READERS?**

People sometimes ask me if they can do what I have achieved, and I always say that I am no one special. I don't have any special powers that made this happen. I just wanted a change so bad that I would stop at nothing to accomplish it. You cannot control everything in your life, but you have TOTAL control of what you put in your mouth. You have TOTAL control of what you eat. So if I can do it, anyone can do it. You just have to want it.



A full-page photograph of a firefighter. He is shirtless, showing extensive tattoos on his arms and chest. He has red and blue face paint on his cheeks and forehead. He is looking down with a serious expression. He is wearing a dark blue belt and yellow firefighter pants. The background is a large American flag. Overlaid on the right side of the image is a quote in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters.

**"MAKE  
STAYING  
HEALTHY  
A FAMILY  
EVENT -  
ENJOY  
NATURE,  
GET OUTSIDE  
AND STAY  
ACTIVE.  
YOU WILL  
SET A GREAT  
EXAMPLE  
FOR YOUR  
CHILDREN."**



1

# WHICH MUSCLES DO YOU GROUP TOGETHER IN A WORKOUT?

An individual's workout split should be created for their own unique goals. My personal workout is centered around my lagging body parts so that I can improve the weak areas of my physique. Here is an example of my lifting schedule:

Mon: quads/glutes, Tue: shoulders/upper chest, Wed: hams/glutes, Thur: biceps/triceps, Fri: hams/glutes/shoulders, Sat: back

2

## I CAN'T DO A PULL-UP. WHICH EXERCISES DO YOU SUGGEST DOING TO BUILD STRENGTH AND ACHIEVE A PULL-UP?

I usually recommend for my clients to begin on the assisted pull up machine. As they get stronger, they will reduce the amount of weight on the machine that is used to assist them. Another great way to achieve a pull up is to practice simply hanging pull ups.

3

## SHOULD YOU DO CARDIO OR WEIGHT LIFTING FIRST DURING YOUR WORKOUT?

Cardio should be done after weight lifting. This will allow you to use your full strength in your lifts.

4

## WHICH SUPPLEMENTS ARE A MUST FOR WEIGHT LOSS?

There is no magical supplement for weight loss. Individuals should focus on FOOD rather than supplements in order to achieve their goal weight.

5

## WHAT DO YOU LOOK FOR IN A GOOD PROTEIN POWDER?

Hydrolized whey protein is my top choice. The amino acid profile in hydrolized whey is optimal for post training and recovery, as well as being quickly absorbed.

6

## DO YOU SUGGEST INTERMITTENT FASTING?

I am not a supporter of intermittent fasting. Everyone has their own preference of weight loss. I, however, believe in eating every 2-4 hours for optimal results.

7

## I AM GETTING BACK INTO WORKING OUT AFTER HAVING A BABY. WHERE SHOULD I START?

The first place to start is at your doctor. Women will want to be sure they are released and have their doctor's approval for working out. After that, just getting out and being active is the most important part. Walk the block with your baby. Home workouts such as plyometrics and circuit training is also a great option when having a newborn. I would also suggest hiring a qualified personal trainer. This will ensure your safety and help speed up your results.

8

## HOW DO YOU KEEP YOUR MOTIVATION WHEN THE SCALE REFUSES TO MOVE?

The scale is not always an indicator of success in your weight loss journey. Sometimes the scale is slow to move, even if inches are lost. I would suggest staying off the scale. Stay focused on your goals. Take it one day at a time.

*Natalie Rochner* ||| [editor@forwardmovementmag.com](mailto:editor@forwardmovementmag.com)

Natalie Rochner is an IFBB Physique Pro who currently resides in Texas. She is a certified Personal Trainer and has a Bachelor's degree in Fitness and Human Performance.

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**GO TO THE  
DOGS**

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16

EDUCATION

**FORWARD**  
moves

# WHAT IS **CROSSFIT**



ARTICLE BY *Beth Conlin* || [www.servingtalent.com](http://www.servingtalent.com)

Beth Conlin is a 35 year old wife, dog mom, former personal trainer turned CrossFit athlete. When she's not at the gym she's likely traveling, cooking, trying new things or working. She is the Director of Recruitment for ServingTalent, the first staffing agency specifically for military and foreign service spouses.



**WHAT'S THE DEAL WITH CROSSFIT? PEOPLE TALK ABOUT IT OBSESSIVELY, ESPECIALLY WHEN THEY FIRST START. IT HAS BEEN AROUND LONG ENOUGH THAT SOMEONE SHOULD TELL THESE PEOPLE THEY ARE NOT THE ONLY ONES DOING IT ANYMORE. AND THE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS AND PHOTOS AND HASHTAGS #CROSSFIT #CROSSFITGIRLS #PALEO #GIRLSWHOLIFT #OMGSHUTUPALREADY. BUT REALLY, HERE IS THE DEAL.**

CrossFit was founded in 2000 by Greg Glassman and his then wife Lauren Jenai. Technically CrossFit is a strength and conditioning program that consists of constantly varied, functional movements, performed over broad times and modal domains. Basically, it is a different workout every day. Some are long, some are short, some heavy, some use no weight, and some are all weight, some are fast (very fast), and some are slow. The idea is to train all the ways our bodies burn energy. Without getting too technical, the amount and the way you burn calories on a 5K run is going to be different than when you do a 3 min sprint, or a 1 rep max back squat. We like to train these avenues to truly get fit.

So how does it work? The how is what I believe makes it so popular. Currently there are over 13,000 CrossFit locations around the world and I don't see that slowing down anytime soon. A little perspective. I'm a former personal trainer and figure competitor turned CrossFit athlete and coach. I'm also a business woman and an Army wife that has been fortunate enough to live (and coach CrossFit) overseas. We lived in Germany for almost three years and now we live in South Korea. I helped open a CrossFit gym in our local German town and designed the programming as well as coached several classes a week. I also coach here in South Korea at the gym on the Army base. My husband and I have traveled all over Europe making sure to stop at the local CrossFit to not only get in a great workout, but to see the community and get some recommendations from locals on where to eat (great way to get non-touristy advice). I tell you all of this because I've seen for myself why CrossFit works. Whether it is at a mega box in the United States, a small box in Germany, or an outdoor gym in Italy, there is a common method used in class. Every class has one or more coaches who walk you through what you will be doing that day, warm you up, and then spend time doing drills or practicing skills before loading a barbell or putting max effort. This is all done under the watchful eye of a coach or coaches. It is basically group personal training, but what sets this program apart from all other





BETH CONLIN IN ACTION.

fitness programs is the people in the class. There is a theme of support, bonding, friendly competition, and people celebrating each other's successes. Every. Damn. Day. It is that community and support system that draws people of all ages, athletic abilities, and genders to CrossFit.

I would argue that the fastest growing segment of CrossFitters are moms. The classes I coach in South Korea are almost exclusively moms and every gym I've ever visited has had a majority of female athletes in class (once you start a CrossFit program you are an "athlete", not a "member"), and most locations offer some type of onsite daycare to accommodate this growing group. Most of my athletes tell me that CrossFit keeps them sane, it is their "me time", their outlet, and it is their one hour a day to feel like a total badass. When you first start CrossFit and you can't even do a push-up, let alone a pull-up or properly lift a barbell, it is easy to feel intimidated. One of the greatest things about CrossFit is the ability to scale all movements to fit your current fitness level making this program accessible to everyone. After a few weeks of scaling the movements, some solid coaching, and the support of other athletes, you get that push-up or you finally get your chin over the bar and everyone is cheering, you can't wait to come back tomorrow. And it doesn't stop there. Eventually you can lift that barbell, climb a rope, and perform handstand push-ups. That is the beauty of this program, you can always improve and every improvement feels just as good as your first one.

Maybe you are not interested in rope climbs or handstand push-ups, and you have no interest in doing a local competition. The differing workouts, the community, and the ability to scale the movements to personalized bodies, ensure that CrossFit is still just as fun and still just as effective. These pillars of CrossFit will have you coming back, proposing you will get more fit, have more fun, and generally become a total badass, one hour at a time.

## HIIT Exercise

Exercise 1:

### **Jump Lunge**

Exercise 2:

### **Mountain Climbers**

Exercise 3:

### **Burpees**

Exercise 4:

### **Sprint**

Exercise 5:

### **Jump Squats**

If you dread those long cardio workouts AND want to blast fat, you may want to consider adding HIIT to your workout schedule. High Intensity Interval Training is gaining popularity due to both its efficiency, as well as its numerous health benefits. HIIT is a workout that alternates bursts of high intense movement with less intensity movements, including even rest. Research shows

that 15 minutes of HIIT exercise burns more calories than an hour of jogging. And while consistent cardio can encourage muscle loss, HIIT maintains muscle integrity, attacking fat instead. Additionally, you burn fat longer. By training in a high heart rate zone, you burn fat and calories during the 24 hours following your workout. And if you needed any more incentive, HIIT increases your metabolism! A 2002 study published in PubMed found a 450% increase in HGH (human growth hormone) during the two hours following a 30 second sprint compared to a six second sprint. Restoring HGH has been shown to provide numerous benefits from aiding in weight loss to improving hormones, to helping increase energy and encouraging more restful sleep. It also helps improve bone density and can help decrease wrinkles.

What are you waiting for? Try this beginner HIIT workout today! Don't forget that it is HIGH intensity training – you must complete the exercises at your absolute top speed.

Complete each exercise for 15 seconds, then rest for 60 seconds and move to the next exercise. Do two rounds. After two weeks, move up to 30 seconds of high intensity work, and keep the 60 seconds rest.



# workout with a **HERO**

WRITTEN BY FORMER ARMY RANGER

## RANGER PT TEST

3 miles run with body armor and helmet

20 ft rope climb

50 yard 150 lb sled drag

Climb 20 ft caving ladder

100 yard sprintClimb over an 8 ft wall

*You have an hour and the goal  
is to improve each time.*

## CIVILIAN VERSION

3 mile run with 25lb weighted vest

Rope climb or 10-15 pull-ups

50 yard tire drag or a ¼ mile sprint  
on a treadmill at a 15 incline

10-15 pull-ups

100 yard sprint

50 Mountain Climbers and/or  
5 minutes on Jacob's Ladder

## Ranger Workout

Army Rangers are some of the most physically capable men. Rangers must pass rigorous physical standards prior to acceptance into this elite unit. These physical requirements help ensure the soldiers safety and success. Rangers could be deployed at any given time and being physically prepared allows them to complete varying missions around the world. They have gone through Ranger School which "is the most physically and mentally demanding leadership school the Army has to offer."

However, military physical fitness has evolved over the past few years. What consisted of more endurance activities (push-ups, sit-ups, running) has refracted to more functional fitness designed to increase strength, speed, and reduce injuries. This workout style is more fitting for modern day war fighting based around having vehicles, making long distance running, a large component of traditional military exercise, less essential. The Army Ranger still completes the Army Physical Fitness Test which is the traditional measuring stick of military fitness, consisting of a two-mile run, two minutes of push-ups, and two minutes of sit-ups. The below Ranger workout was one of the first deviations from the APFT, but workouts continue to be modified and improved to meet the evolving needs of a soldier.

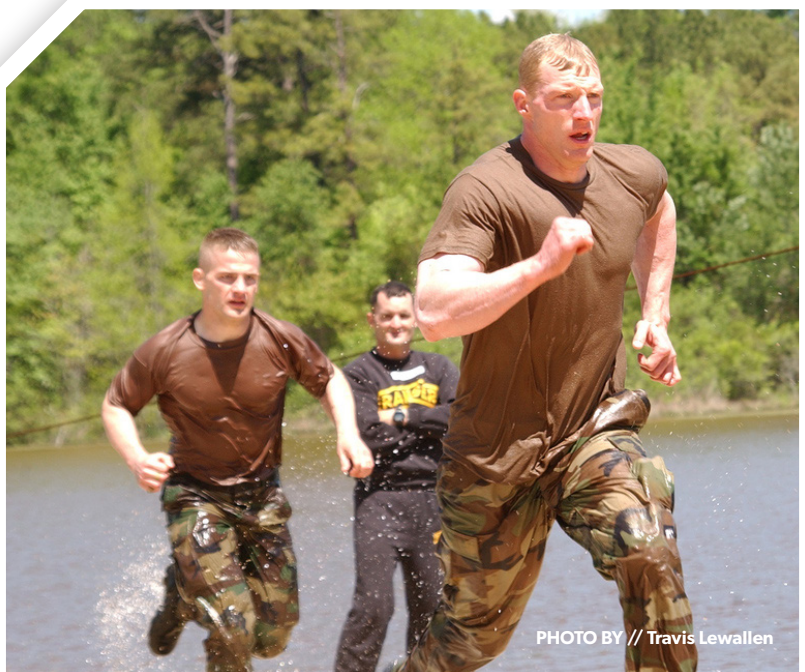


PHOTO BY // Travis Lewallen



# NADINE DUMAS



INTERVIEW BY AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY *James Patrick*

## WHAT STARTED YOUR JOURNEY INTO THE HEALTH AND FITNESS INDUSTRY?

I was living in the Cayman Islands working as an accountant and noticed a number of people at my gym training for some kind of fitness event. I ended up inquiring about the event and later that month attended the competition and decided to give it a go on my own. From there I fell in love with the industry. Later that year I moved back to Canada to finish my accounting designation, ended up putting it on the back burner and took all of my courses to become a trainer and sports nutritionist. I invested all of my time in the industry from educating myself, teaching others, competing and 3 years later, launching my online business and moving back to Cayman where I now live.

## AT WHAT POINT DO YOU BELIEVE YOU SET THE FOUNDATION FOR WHAT YOUR BRAND WAS TO BECOME OR WHAT YOU WANTED IT TO BE?

I believe it was in the last year that I was able to do that. Over the years I have worked really hard to maintain the

integrity in my brand, figure out exactly what I want to do and which avenues to pursue. Last year was when I noticed that it all came together. I knew getting into this industry was going to be tough and there was a lot of competition, so I understood that it would take time to build and I allowed that to happen.

## HOW HAVE YOU MANAGED WHAT YOUR BRAND IS AND HOW IT IS VIEWED?

I have managed my brand and how it's viewed through my consistency in the industry. I have invested a lot of time in my company and stayed committed to what I believe in.

## WHAT IMPORTANT LESSONS HAVE YOU LEARNED ABOUT THE BEST WAYS TO MANAGE YOUR BRAND OR MISTAKES YOU HAVE LEARNED FROM?

It would be to stay true to who you are. I have seen a lot of people in this industry get sucked into avenues they may not have wanted to go or were not in line with who they are.



**IN A LITTLE OVER A YEAR YOU APPEARED ON FOUR FITNESS MAGAZINE COVERS ACROSS THE WORLD. HOW HAVE YOU MARKETING YOURSELF TO VARIOUS PUBLICATIONS AND THEIR EDITORS?**

I work very hard at maintaining my relationships with different publications and editors. I learn about their magazines and what is the best approach to take, but also how I can align myself with their magazine. You constantly have to ask yourself, what can you contribute to their magazine that will engage readers.

**WHAT DID THE MEDIA FEATURES END UP DOING FOR THE VISIBILITY OF YOUR BRAND?**

It really grew my brand globally. In one year I had features in 5 different countries, so there were many eyes on my brand, which then lead to people visiting my site. In the end you want to be able to tell people about your product and get to know you more and what you do, so this helped a lot.

**HOW DID YOU CULTIVATE AND MANAGE YOUR GROWING AUDIENCE?**

Not going to lie, this was the toughest part. It is only me; so there were a lot of times I felt as though I was spinning my wheels trying to make sure I was managing my growing audience. I had a lot of advice from people that really helped me learn the proper techniques to manage it all. I think I did a fairly good job and have learned from it, which is only helping me more for the future.

**WHAT DO YOU DO TO EVALUATE WHAT YOUR AUDIENCE WANTS AS WELL AS EXPERTS TO SEE FROM YOU?**

I think about my target market, my demographic and base it off of that. You see what gets the most interactions, leads and conversions. Yes you can have a post for instance, that can get numerous likes on it but then you can





look into it more and see what the conversion is, did it lead to your site, did it lead to a sale, did it impact people the way you wanted it to. Everything I post (for the most part) has a reason behind it to target a certain audience.

### **HOW ARE YOU LEVERAGING THE MEDIA FEATURES YOU'VE RECEIVED TO TURN YOUR BRAND INTO A BUSINESS?**

I've been able to use the features with numerous companies to pitch myself. My goal this year is to go more mainstream so I am wanting to reach out to certain companies that are in line with my demographic and the route I am wanting to take. By using the media features I am able to show what I can do, my writing style, my look and how it can work in line with their company.

### **WHAT ARE SOME OF THE VARIOUS TACTICS YOU USE TO MARKET YOURSELF?**

I use different tactics depending on if it's through social media, online or in the physical presence of others. When I am in the presence of others I am able to talk about my brand and how it relates to their product. Media kits are always great for this. Social media, I am able to show different sides of myself, whether it be my personal side, being a mother, a businesswoman etc. I market according to those that I want to inspire and can relate. Online, for instance, searching through Google, I look to position myself based on searches and get my website in front of them.

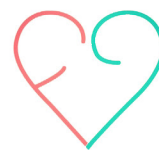
### **HOW DO YOU DETERMINE WHO TO WORK WITH AS IT PERTAINS TO THE PHOTOGRAPHERS YOU HIRE?**

Good question. A few key things I look for is who they work with, what my interaction is like with them whether it be through email or in person, do they shoot the style I like and that will work for my brand, and are we able to work together on a vision. Being on the same page is key. I also look to work with photographers that want to see you succeed, they work hard in their line of work and they produce quality images (turn over time is very important as well)

### **WHAT MISTAKES HAVE YOU MADE OR HAVE YOU SEEN OTHER TALENTS MAKE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THEIR BRANDS?**

Not truly defining what their brand is. I think that once you can define your brand you are able to make proper decisions based from there. There are so many that maybe have yet to define their brand or are not too sure so they reach for whatever they can get which might end up putting themselves in a position of their brand not aligning with who they are portraying themselves to be. It's a tough industry and it's very easy to get sucked into the 'likes' and the 'followers', the companies that approach you to promote their product which you may not believe in or shooting with a photographer that might not be good for your brand. So many things have to be fully thought out before making a decision that in the end could hurt you in the long run.





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A pregnant woman with long, wavy brown hair is shown from the waist up, turned slightly to her right. She is wearing a black sports bra and grey athletic shorts with black stripes on the side. She is in a gym setting, with a clock and some gym equipment visible in the background. The lighting is warm and focused on her.

## MEET AMBER DOBECKA.

Amber and her husband, Micah, had been trying to have a child for years. After years of disappointment, Amber put a new emphasis on healing her body through nutrition and prayer. Amber believes "life is made up of seasons" and it's easy to see which season she currently finds herself.

# SEASON of





# STRENGTH

WRITTEN BY *Jaime Kimmons*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY // Audra Oden  
HAIR AND MAKEUP BY // Brea of Kiss and Makeup  
LOCATION // The Fort Worth Field House



# YOU ARE A SWEATY MESS RUNNING ON THE TREADMILL IN ORANGE THEORY FITNESS. **AMBER DOBECKA IS THE COACH AND THERE IS NO HIDING FROM HER.**

When she says, “Empty your tank, leave nothing on the table” she isn’t just going through the motions. She expects hard work and discipline from her classes, from her clients through her successful online fitness business she launched in 2013, and from herself. The best way to describe Dobecka is authentic. You could use many other words to describe her – beautiful, charismatic, a fitness mover and shaker, and strong. Dobecka is at heart a motivator. She is shaking up the fitness world by being authentic to herself and by having confidence in and using the gifts God has given her. She is nine months pregnant and surprises both herself and others with her strength. However, what Dobecka is most surprised about is how her definition of strength has changed. And how her relationship with her body has changed.

Dobecka had an early introduction to fitness; her mother was a group exercise instructor and would drag her to classes. Eventually, she found she loved the feeling of exercise and what it did for her body and soul. Dobecka went on to cheer in both high school and then at the collegiate level at Baylor University. She paid her rent by teaching fitness classes and leading conditioning classes for cheerleading, as well as at local gyms. At Baylor, she studied nutrition and an internship project addressing child nutrition and the

declining health of children over recent years sparked her interest and her desire to be part of the solution.

After college, Dobecka decided to start training for a fitness competition and went on to compete in five competitions (four in Bikini division and one in Fitness division). Surprisingly, she realized it wasn’t the competitions that changed or improved her, it was the what she learned while training. She says, “True strength is acquired through humility and love... a love of God, a love of oneself, and a love for people.” And Dobecka is strong, so we at Forward Movement take notes when she talks about strength. Dobecka uses her heart for people to help people transform themselves with her fitness business, Amber Michelle Fit, LLC.

With a perspective reserved for looking back at events in your life and making sense of them, Dobecka sees that what she learned in these years of fitness prepared her for one of the difficulties in her life. For years Dobecka and her husband, Micah, tried to get pregnant. She kept a good attitude and took things one step at a time. After unsuccessful infertility treatments, they decided to stop. However, this was not Dobecka giving up. She took a step back and did what she knew best: heal the body through nutrition and prayer. Several months later, she found herself struggling during a workout on the rowing machine; her suspicions were con-











about

# AMBER DOBECKA



firmed. She was finally pregnant. In an instant, the body she carefully sculpted and defined for years and viewed through a competitor's eye for success, was now looked at differently. She looked at her body with love and gratitude – it was healed by God and carrying her miracle.

Dobecka has found herself in a new field – maternity fitness. “Being pregnant ignited an energy to train for the right reasons, finally. Not a physical energy, so much, but a motivation to think beyond myself. I look for opportunities to continue this approach: encouraging others in my classes, at the grocery store, or wherever. If I can offer love and grace to someone else, then I’ve found true joy in whatever circumstance comes my way.” She also found herself taking her own advice: listening to your body, and used this as her rule of thumb with fitness from the beginning. She continues to do all the activities she did prior to pregnancy, but slowly dialed down the intensity of sprinting, rowing, cycling. The one thing she never has done is stop. She says, “When it comes to your pregnant body, treat it like you will your baby. Take care of it. Listen to it. Study it. Comfort it. Educate it. Discipline it. Rest it. Pray for it.” Dobecka has provided us some tips and exercises for the three differing trimesters of pregnancy we have published in this issue.

As her body demands have changed over the last several months, Dobecka continues to learn. “One of the most crucial changes I’ve

Amber is an Orange Theory Fitness Coach and ZYNstructor at ZYN22 from Coppell, Texas. She started her own fitness and nutrition coaching team called Amber Michelle Fit, LLC in 2013, and coaches a variety of people from the new mom to the current Ms. Texas. She’s all about looking inside yourself and discovering there’s freedom and power in embracing your weakness. Amber’s had a passion for all things fitness since she was young. Since her “glory days” as a cheerleader at Baylor University, she’s fostered that love through bodybuilding and training others to live healthy lives. When Amber is not in studios, you can expect to find her feeding her two goats, her two pomeranians, her hubby Micah, or soon-to-arrive baby Lincoln.



made is to implement more rest into my day. I believe God has been trying to get me to rest more for a long time, and now that I have a baby to think about, I have given in and love it!” says Dobecka. She is still lifting heavy weights, just watching the pressure it puts on her ab muscles. Surprisingly, by being aware of her body and getting adequate rest, she has been able to maintain the same weights she was lifting before pregnancy. By acknowledging her body has a different purpose right now in this season, she has made the appropriate adjustments, but still is able to maintain her strength, attitude, and delight in her gifts.

One of her gifts is to encourage. She wants fellow pregnant moms to have self-love, even if it may be a first for them. “Don’t let former negative self-images ruin your miraculous experience. Yes, you are bigger than you once were, and although no woman wants to be “big,” your body is being used for the betterment of someone else now. Study what it means to be humble, and read up on what it means to truly love.”

Dobecka is an inspiration to women in all walks of life as she calls us to love ourselves and live a fitter life for ourselves and our families. She shows us how patience pays off, self-reliance is key, life is made up of seasons, and how strength changes over time. And give the glory to God!

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*Congratulations to Amber and Micah! Lincoln Colt Dobecka was born at 7:05am on Nov. 15, 2016.*



# How to Transform **YOUR BODY, SOUL AND SPIRIT**

WRITTEN BY *Amber Dobecka*

As I near one of the most important days in my 27 years of living, the birth of my first child, I'm in awe of the miraculous transformation that has taken place in my body, soul, and spirit. I truly believe God gave us a 9-10 month gestation period because there is much more preparation to be done than the growth of the baby. With each new week, I'm growing too — and not just physically. Like my own baby growing little by little inside my womb, I can see how God looked at me as His precious child growing little by little in the season of pre-pregnancy.

About three years ago, my husband and I desperately wanted to get pregnant. We tried just playing it out without birth control; we tried infertility medicine; and we got close to in-vitro. I was completely heartbroken over my failure to be all that is woman. In a world that says, "Hard work, determination, and will power can get you wherever you want to go," I found myself blaming and hating my body more than ever before.

## **IT WAS IN THAT SEASON THAT GOD HEALED ME.**

When I felt my most broken, God drew me close to Him. I decided that I had two choices: to be discouraged and hate myself forever, or to learn to rejoice in my life as it was. This did not mean I was giving up on getting pregnant. In fact, we still continued trying and researching, and the desire never left my husband's nor my heart. However, I decided to truly trust God with my life and not rely on my own efforts to sustain me. I decided that in order to transform my body, I needed to transform my soul, my mind, will, and emotions.

## **I LEARNED TO TAKE THE ATTENTION OFF MYSELF.**

In my article *How Pregnancy Frees Me from Body Image Obsession*, I note that learning I was pregnant instantly reiterated everything God had been stirring in my heart about my purpose as a health coach and fitness instructor. It's not about me!

"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect." — Romans 12:2 NLT

In my prayers, I constantly declared my identity as a child of God and that He created me perfectly. I focused on worshipping God despite my disappointing circumstances. I read books about controlling one's thoughts and being intentional with one's words. I spent more time thinking about others and building relationships with friends and clients instead of working on my own physique. I decided that if it wasn't time for me to be pregnant, it probably meant God wanted to teach me more and/or He wanted to use me to help someone else. And before I knew it, that season was over. I found myself bouncing up and down in my apartment bathroom with my two pomeranians praising God over a positive pregnancy test!



I DECIDED TO  
TRULY TRUST  
GOD WITH  
MY LIFE AND  
NOT RELY  
ON MY OWN  
EFFORTS TO  
SUSTAIN ME.  
I DECIDED  
THAT IN  
ORDER TO  
TRANSFORM  
MY BODY,  
**I NEEDED TO  
TRANSFORM  
MY SOUL,  
MY MIND,  
WILL AND  
EMOTIONS.**





# FIVE TIPS FOR TRANS FORM ATION

My season of heartache relates to the period of suffering we go through in an intense workout. While at times, it seems like it will never end. We may even question our reasons for putting ourselves through the torture. Then, we remind ourselves that “we gladly suffer, because we know that suffering helps us to endure. And endurance builds character, which gives us hope” (Romans 5:2-4 CEV).

If I hadn’t endured the season of pain that I did, I wouldn’t be sharing my testimony, and I may not have acquired the understanding of God’s love that I have now. Below are the five practices God helped me transform.

## 1 - GAIN FREEDOM FROM DIET MENTALITY

The struggle is real! Breaking the diet mentality has been a challenge for me for a long time. I can remember limiting my calorie intake as early as 12 years old. When I trained for fitness competitions, a regimented meal plan ruled my life. This is okay if it’s temporary, but that’s the hard part: learning balance. When I decided that freedom and joy were my top priorities, having a “hot” body moved down a few notches. I stopped restricting my food so much. I enjoyed foods I used to limit, like fats and carbohydrates. In turn, I didn’t feel the need to reward myself with as much food, often leading to binge eating. To heal the mind, you have to understand that dieting will only make you crave the off-limit foods, increase your hunger, and leave you dissatisfied with life.

The other part of the diet mentality is fitness. Just like you can overdo it on the nutrition side with how much time you spend thinking about food, you can overtrain. In my own life, I was a self-proclaimed exercise-addict. I was teaching my body to run on as few calories as possible and still endure hours of cardio. In this transformative season before pregnancy, I tried to spend no more than 25-35 minutes doing cardio. I often tell my clients to do as little cardio as they can get away with because unless you’re training for a marathon, you don’t want your body to adapt. I still spend a lot of time exercising, but my reasons are different. Now, I’m not punishing myself for over-eating, but I listen to my body when it needs rest, recovery, and refueling.

## 2 - HEAL HORMONES WITH SPECIFIC FOODS

In my efforts to take away all restrictive mindsets about food, I found myself gravitating towards high fat foods. This led me to research a way of eating called Nutritional Ketosis. I decided that I wasn’t going to trade in one set of restrictions for another, but that I would intentionally implement a heck of a lot more fats that I’d ever eaten before.

In traditional nutrition, the body runs primarily on carbohydrates for fuel. All carbs are broken down into glucose (or sugar). We get addicted to sugar easily because the body uses it first and foremost for everything. Plus, unless you’re growing your own food or strick about where you buy your food, you probably have some level of toxicity in your body due to the increase in artificial ingredients and over-processing of food. When you combine excess glucose and toxins, you get stubborn fat stores and messed up hormones. I believe this is where my body was ... in deep need of hormone healing. In Nutritional Ketosis, the body is sustained with fuel from fats and glucose is minimized, which helps keep your blood sugar at a normal to low level. Insulin levels spike less, and your hormones reset. I didn’t count macros or calories be-



cause I was in the whole diet mentality. I simply ate as much high fat foods as I wanted. Nuts, avocados, almond butter, oils, bacon, eggs (not just the whites), grass-fed beef, salmon, and cheese were all staples for me. These were healthy fats that helped teach my body how to produce the hormones I was missing. I was still satisfied not eating super-high carb foods like bread, crackers, chips, etc. In turn, I probably ate a lot more calories than I had ever eaten before helping my body to recover and refuel like it had been begging me to do for years.

### 3 - INCREASE CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM FUNCTION WITH CHIROPRACTIC CARE

Although your body can go days without water and even minutes without oxygen, it cannot survive even a second without proper nerve supply. The concept of misalignment in my spine and how it relates to my central nervous system (CNS) and hormonal health completely shocked me. I have control over my nutrition and fitness and rest, but I need some help when it comes to chiropractic care.

In my first visit to Dr. Erb's Maximized Living clinic, I learned that the subluxation on my spine was causing dysfunction in my CNS and, in turn, my hormones. Blood tests showed my FHA levels were extremely low making my estrogen and progesterone nearly nonexistent. This also made my menstrual cycle nonexistent. Nobody would complain about that symptom unless you're trying to get pregnant, right? Dr. Erb and his staff adjusted my spine regularly each week starting the day after we decided to not do in-vitro. They taught me that the misalignment of my lower back was putting pressure on my uterus, and the misalignment in my neck was causing interruptions in the nerve flow between my sex organs and hypothalamus. I had originally gone to get an adjustment out of curiosity, but six months later, I found myself going three times a week until I became pregnant.

### 4 - ESTABLISH PEACE WITH THE BODY IN ITS CURRENT STATE

One of the most important disciplines I started instituting was journaling. I've always been a note-taker, so this was an easy way to keep myself accountable

in my journey. I started writing down my prayers, and I started using my YouVersion Bible app to do devotionals. I jumped on any reference to peace, suffering, waiting, joy or patience. The more time I devoted to this practice, the more I understood about God. The more I understood about God, the more I saw myself through His eyes. It was all about appreciating what my body did for me, and how to be grateful for all God had already given me. I constantly prayed for God to heal me and for me to not compare myself with others.

### 5 - DISCOVER ONE'S PURPOSE FOR SEEKING OPTIMAL HEALTH

Honestly, this one wasn't actually affirmed in me until I learned I was pregnant. I knew that God created me to be an encourager which is why I loved teaching fitness classes and helping others see the strength and beauty inside themselves. Going through pregnancy only confirms the idea that my purpose on this earth goes beyond my own pleasure or profit.

When I studied what God desired for his people, I kept coming back to the idea of love. A love for God, for myself, and for others. Once I started getting back to the basics of what God wanted from me, I found it easy to walk in my purpose of inspiring others: to spark a confidence in others, to truly looking beyond myself. I focused on my words — to speak only encouraging words and not complain. I tried to cut out habits like surfing social media and hanging around certain people that made me revert to comparing myself to others. I think the biggest takeaway is getting real with God and trying to hear what He's saying.

If I've learned anything, I've learned that you should never stop being teachable. It keeps you humble. And when you pair that with transparency, God redeems your vulnerability in the connection He makes with you and the connections you build with others. I often encourage my clients that we compare ourselves in our strengths, but we connect through our weaknesses. Don't ever think that your weakness makes you broken. Or that your struggle steals your strength. It's in these seasons, that God pulls us closer.



# WORK OUT BY *Trimester*

WRITTEN BY *Amber Dobecka*

## IT IS GOOD FOR PREGNANT WOMEN TO CONTINUE WHATEVER FITNESS ROUTINES THEY WERE DOING BEFORE PREGNANCY.

Although she may experience some slack in effort or intensity (especially in the first trimester), she should give herself the grace to understand she is now training for two.

Whatever happens, unless mandated by a doctor, I encourage pregnant women to try to stay as active as possible. In my experience, one feels better during and after working out than on rest days. Exercise releases a surge of energy and endorphins, so especially because we can't drink as much caffeine as others, I'd say, "Don't miss a workout!"

My favorite exercises usually include the booty, but anything where you use your bigger muscle groups will help challenge the core.

You can also combine a lower body and upper body movement to challenge the core. For example, a squat to a press, or a "thruster."

### CORE EXERCISES:

**Planks (with various movements)\***

**Neutral Half or Full Thrusters**

**Lunge to a Bicep Curl**

**Step Up with a Press or Curl**

**Chest Press with Leg Scissors\*\***

**Chest Press with an Isolated Glute Bridge**

**Bird Dogs on Knees**

*\*As the belly grows, one can put hands under shoulders for a high plank instead of elbows.*

*\*\*Scissors not recommended past the second trimester.*

### FIRST TRIMESTER/ SECOND TRIMESTER

#### DUMBBELL OR BARBELL EXERCISES:

**Reverse Lunges**

**Walking Lunges**

**Step-Ups (use bench)**

**Goblet Squats**

**Sumo Squats**

**Deadlifts**

**Lateral and Frontal Raises**

**Chest Press**

**Bent-Over Rows**

The first trimester is a good time to continue crunches and full sit-ups, depending on one's previous core strength. Leg raises, single leg V-ups, and torso rotations are fine as well. TRX or SBT bands are a good modification for those who feel insecure about doing straight core work. However, you want to keep the core strength up since these muscles will be showing up for work when you deliver the baby in just a few short months!

These options are also good for the second and third trimester.

The second and, especially third trimester is a good time to utilize the TRX and SBT bands to engage your core, but not put as much pressure on it as with sit-ups or crunches.



### THIRD TRIMESTER

The best rule of thumb is to listen to your body. Many women will be unable to perform exercises flat on their back once the belly starts getting large. It is perfectly fine to be at an incline, or perform a similar exercise standing up. Women are encouraged to work at the same intensity as before pregnancy, but your body will tell you when you should start slowing down. Listen to it. Also, be wary of possible decreased balance towards the end of your pregnancy.

A good alternate to running during the third trimester is cycling, walking with incline, stair climber, and the elliptical. Be mindful of your heart rate, and don't shoot for breathless during this trimester. Exercises can continue to be modified to accommodate a growing belly. For instance, single leg dead lifts, lateral lunges, and standing oblique work are options in the last few months when the belly is quite large.

Keep active, have fun, and know you are giving your body and your baby innumerable benefits.







# POWER to PERSIST

moving forward with **motivation**


WRITTEN BY *David Robson*

While training success is reliant upon a great many factors (genetics, skill level, environmental etc) its single biggest determinant is motivation. Indeed, how vigorously a training target is coveted supersedes all other performance enhancers - including 'supplements' and expert instruction. Whatever the incentive and no matter how strong this incentive is, without sufficient motivation to achieve, a willingness to consistently and persistently seek results may dissipate faster than the gains of post-cycle steroid user.

Motivation, a condition of eagerness, is a major driving force that controls why we behave and act in certain ways. Motivation also defines achievement. For any action to be enthusiastically executed and sustained, motivation must play a central role. But motivation itself can be difficult to maintain. Though often considered singularly important for training success, motivation nevertheless is strongly influenced by a diverse range of interdependent variables. And while it may be the deciding factor in whether we ultimately achieve an extra 100lbs on the bench press or banish our unsightly body-flab, motivation always


comes at a cost. We cannot install motivation as a form of biological software and program it to run according to a specific list of commands - on time, every time. We cannot simply claim to be motivated and hope for the best. Nor can we expect motivation levels to stay consistently high without commensurate effort applied to keeping them there. Like most worthy endeavors, ongoing motivation first requires a willingness to work hard. Motivation is not a one size fits all proposition either. It must be carefully cultivated and nurtured in line with specific goals. So what are the best ways to increase this essential training ingredient? Look no further. By practicing the following five steps a steady-supply of workout-boosting motivation can be yours.





**LIKE MOST  
WORTHY  
ENDEAVORS,  
ONGOING  
MOTIVATION  
FIRST REQUIRES  
A WILLINGNESS  
TO WORK HARD.**



A woman with blonde hair, wearing a grey sports bra and black shorts, is lifting a dumbbell with her right arm. She is looking down at the dumbbell. The background is dark.

**HONORING  
OUR PERSONAL  
DEFINITION  
OF SUCCESS  
ENCOURAGES  
OWNERSHIP  
OF AND THE  
OUTCOMES  
ASSOCIATED WITH  
OUR TRAINING  
EFFORTS.**



A woman with long blonde hair, wearing a black sports bra and black shorts, is shown from the side, lifting a black dumbbell with her right arm. The background is dark, and the lighting highlights her muscles and the dumbbell.

## DEFINE YOUR DEFINITION OF **SUCCESS**

Motivation cannot be sustained when striving to honor another's definition of success. Each of us has training goals that inspire lofty efforts and enhance focus and drive. However, knowing precisely what you want from your workouts is ultimately for you to decide. Indeed, the degree to which your training goals are achieved can be traced back to how you define success. Honoring our personal definition of success encourages ownership of and the outcomes associated with our training efforts. When a well-meaning person tells you what you should be training for you may be reluctant to fully invest your time and energy in pursuing it. It may have no real meaning for you as it may not fit your definition of success. Thus a trainer must determine a series of steps that best accommodate his or her clients' personal goals. You may wish to build a nice body for the beach, while your trainer, for example, may push you the way he or she would an elite athlete. This trainer may wish to acknowledge that effectiveness and competence are best developed when a person does things on his or her own terms. Define your own success, take ownership of your training, and more motivation to achieve will take you further, faster.

## ENJOY THE **PROCESS**

One trait noted in most high achievers is a willingness to do the things that need to be done whether they are enjoyable or not. That being said, the enjoyment we receive from what we do may, more than anything else, sustain motivation for longer. Enjoyment is heavily associated with passion and passion fuels productivity. When workouts are enjoyable we savor the anticipation of an upcoming session and are less likely to procrastinate (either by missing workouts or slacking off mid-session). Though grueling workouts do not conjure images of great fun and frivolity, it's precisely the tough nature of training that draws many to the gym. Whether your training is blisteringly intensive or a more relaxed plod on the treadmill, it's important to enjoy the process. And stop referring to your training as "embracing the grind." Rather, view your workouts as challenging excursions where productivity reigns and your mind and body are shaped for the better. There is great joy to be found in even the most brutal of training sessions; fatigue, swollen muscles and muscle failure all signify goal achievement and training-induced pain can be seen as a key predictor of results. So for continued training progress, learn to enjoy your workouts and savor results that inevitably occur when a motivated mindset is among your pre-workout essentials.





## PROPER SCHEDULING

Keep motivation high by prioritizing your workouts. Before embarking on any training mission, be sure to properly schedule your sessions so as to avoid scheduling conflicts. Make your training time sacred and miss workouts only in times of emergency. With the fast-paced world in which we live, interrupting influences are many. With a great many demands competing for our time the one 'luxury' many feel can be 'sacrificed' is the gym. Avoid this mistake! Missed training sessions (unless specifically planned for) can severely disrupt the momentum and motivation that forges continuous progress. Scheduling your sessions at fixed intervals (rather than training more arbitrarily) and maintaining a rigid training schedule can strengthen motivation by helping to eliminate guilt (from missed workouts) and anxiety (from interrupted progress).



## DETERMINE YOUR MOTIVATING FACTORS

We are often motivated by many different things. Unfortunately, certain motivating factors may also cancel out achievement in related areas. The key to successful living is to have all of our motivating factors in an alignment to where each complements the other. Motivating factors,

each related to the intrinsic nature of our work, are the real drivers of behavior and ultimate success. Autonomy, personal growth, achievement and responsibility are but four such factors. The ongoing motivation to succeed in the gym can only be sustained when the motivating factors in our life are in harmony with our likes and preferences. Once determined, this melding of motivational forces operates synergistically to push us faster toward goal completion. For example, some people are motivated best when told to follow orders while others are more motivated when working autonomously. While following a training system where every set and rep is prescribed may benefit the former individual, such an approach would almost certainly create conflict for the latter, who would likely respond best by charting their own course – and vice versa. Before planning your workouts, first determine your motivating factors to minimize any such conflict and to keep the motivation to achieve consistently high.



## EMBRACE THE GOOD AND THE BAD

In a perfect training world, setbacks and sidetracking would not interfere with progress. But life is not so easy and the best plans do not always follow a perfect trajectory. The one thing for certain about anything in life is that our motivation will be tested. When this happens we must stand strong and remind ourselves that by overcoming

adversity we will become stronger and better able to achieve any goal before us. But this can be easier said than done. Training injuries, illness, financial problems and other unforeseen circumstances can impede training progress for weeks or months. Such events may cause many lose their drive to continue. When facing a setback keep your motivation high by recalling positive progress, dreaming big for future success and knowing that your comeback will separate you from the countless others who would just as easily quit. Overcoming struggles allows us to return stronger while ensuring that the motivation to continue is also stronger than ever.



## THE POWER TO PERSIST

Poor motivation ultimately leads to training stagnation. A force for change, motivation compels positive action and guides productivity. It comes as no surprise then that the most committed trainees are also the most highly motivated. Motivation fluctuates daily. Some days we simply do not have the drive to push that little bit harder in the gym. The weights feel heavier; an hour of cardio feels like running a marathon. Fortunately there is much that can be done to increase our power to persist. By following the above-listed rules your training sessions are likely to become more meaningful and enjoyable. And the greater progress you experience will add further motivation to excel to heights previously unimagined.



A full-page photograph of a muscular Black man with short, dark hair, shirtless, performing a resistance band exercise. He is holding a black resistance band with yellow handles in his right hand, pulling it across his chest. His left arm is bent, and his hand is near his head. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting his well-defined muscles, particularly his chest, shoulders, and abdominal muscles. The background is dark and out of focus.

**OVERCOMING  
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IS ALSO  
STRONGER  
THAN EVER.**



# WHY YOU SHOULD USE ESSENTIAL OILS

WRITTEN BY *Jeremy Tallo*

SIMPLY  
PUT, BECAUSE  
THEY WORK!  
HECK, THEY WERE  
GOOD ENOUGH  
FOR JESUS,  
RIGHT?

## LAVENDAR OIL

Any time you are doing a fitness program that involves barbells, dumbbells, pull-up bars, jump ropes, plyometric boxes, running, rowing, medicine balls, you will likely to encounter abrasions, cuts, scrapes and bruises. If you can look at it and say "well that didn't look like that when I started the workout," use some lavender.

You can apply it directly to the spot, or just rub it in around the perimeter. The skin is an amazing organ that knows how to pull that goodness right in.

## PEPPERMINT OIL

This is a great go-to oil for both pre and post gym usage. Put a drop in a water bottle to support respiratory function, increase energy, and get an edge on your workouts. It can also be used pre-workout to warm up your muscles. Just put a few drops on the muscles you will be working and rub it in. It can also be a tasty addition to almond milk or a chocolate protein shake.

## WINTERGREEN OIL

Whether you are just beginning your fitness journey, or a seasoned athlete, we all stress our bodies during workouts. Rubbing wintergreen into these stressed areas is warming and soothing. I like to use it the most on my knees, wrists, elbows and lower back.

*Recommended oils for the gym*



I'M SURE YOU'VE HEARD OF "ESSENTIAL OILS", BUT MAYBE YOU ARE UNSURE OF WHAT THAT MEANS. PICK UP A FLOWER, PLANT, OR LEAF, AND RUB IT BETWEEN YOUR FINGERS. YOU'LL START TO CATCH A DISTINCT "PLANT-Y" SMELL. DO YOU KNOW THAT WHAT YOU ARE SMELLING IS THE RAW FORM OF THE PLANT - THE ESSENTIAL OIL?

Through a distillation process, the pure form of the essential oils are extracted from the plant and bottled or blended for usage. Essential oils are fat soluble, meaning when applied topically, they bypass the digestive system and the blood stream absorbs them.

What am I saying exactly? Essential oils work quickly! Because essential oils get absorbed into the blood stream, they travel to every cell. The plant molecules, which make up the essential oils, are smaller than the human molecular makeup. This allows them to actually pass through the human blood cells and give cell support right to the source.

Essential oils can be used in 3 different ways - Aromatically (diffused in the air), topically (placed on the skin) and internally (taken down the hatch). The combination of these three uses can provide the most health benefit possible.

It's also cool to know that essential oils can support all the body's main systems (cardiovascular, endocrine, integumentary, digestive, muscular, skeletal, lymphatic, respiratory, nervous, reproductive, renal). The fun part is figuring out which body system you need to support first! My family has used essential oils proactively to support our body systems for years, and we love them.

Some of my favorite ways to use essential oils is as part of my pre and/or post workout routine along with my daily health regimen. Essential oils can also be used to cook with and to flavor drinks. You should know that essential oils are incredibly concentrated so a little bit goes a long way. You may want to try adding them to your day-to-day recipes. My family loves homemade tomato sauce and meatballs and a dab of basil oil is the perfect additive. And it helps with anti-aging while you are chowing down on your spaghetti!

### Try adding essential oils to the following

Lemon  
Pepper  
Chicken

#### **LEMON VITALITY OIL**

Cilantro  
Lime Rice

#### **LIME VITALITY OIL**

Beef Roast

#### **CLOVE VITALITY OIL**

Hot Apple  
Cider

#### **CINNAMON BARK VITALITY OIL**

## ABOUT THE *author*



## JEREMY TALLO

Lifetime athlete and pursuer of health and fitness, Jeremy has a B.S. in Criminal Justice from SUNY Brockport, and lives in the Dallas-Fort Worth Area with his Young Living Diamond leader wife Hannah and four children.

GET IN TOUCH WITH JEREMY  
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WRITTEN BY *Michael Collado*

# 5 WEIGHT LOSS TIPS

**THESE TIPS** are powerful and most people already know them, yet for some reason still find it difficult to follow.

I would suggest to look deeper into your soul, right down to the marrow of your bones and reveal the matter that creates the behaviors that has allowed you to become unhealthy, deconditioned, and frustrated. I've had the opportunity to train many clients in the 17 years I've been in the industry. All of the successful ones have shared what it took to reach the successful end. Through the journeys of my past clients, the following page provides some tips that seemed to inspire and move them.

IT WOULD BE EASY FOR ME TO DISH OUT THE TYPICAL FITNESS TIPS AND SAY TO LOSE WEIGHT YOU NEED TO IMPLEMENT

**Cardiovascular Training**

**Strength and Conditioning Training**

**Daily Vitamins and Minerals**

**Hydration through Water Intake**

**Possibly Invest in Professional Assistance**



1

## KNOW WHO YOU ARE AND CONFESS YOUR WEAKNESSES

Face those daily actions and the state of mind that has gotten you to this point of frustration. Understanding the triggers that create these bad habits allows you to be aware of yourself and more prepared to change.

2

## ANNOUNCE YOUR COMMITMENT

Tell everyone who needs to know and more! Be vulnerable and challenge your determination, and you will be amazed by the support you will receive. You will find that you are not alone and some who support you will also walk and sweat by you from time to time. This is where you can start building a positive and motivating support group of people.

3

## SHARE YOUR SMALL WINS AND SETBACKS

Announce every accomplishment big or small so you keep your supporters cheering and your moral up. Understand that every day will be a challenge. You won't always win. Sharing your setbacks will remind you and others of the challenges you face. As you conquer those setbacks with determination, your diligence will strengthen your will, your mind, and the cheers from your supporters, and this is when you become an inspiration.

4

## START A PERSONAL FITNESS JOURNAL/DIARY

It's a lost art. You don't hear about personal diaries anymore. This used to be a tool where we can write our deepest darkest personal secrets and emotions. It is a powerful tool allowing you to see your personal growth over time. Questions will be answered and the mood of your passages will change.

5

## FAITH WITH WORK AND DAILY MEDITATION

The good Book says that, "Faith is the confidence that what we hope for will actually happen; it gives us assurance about things we cannot see." That same book also states that Faith WITHOUT work is dead. Having faith alone is not enough. You need the right tools to do the work. These tools are the tips I been sharing with you including this one. When you apply these tips your work will be honest and true. With this type of work your faith will strengthen and keep you on the right path. Meditate daily.

WE ARE ALL A WORK IN PROGRESS. THOSE WHO SPEAK, THINK, AND BELIEVE THE POWER OF THIS MENTAL STRENGTHENING WILL PREVAIL IN THE END. TRAIN AND LEAD THE FIGHT WITH YOUR MIND, BODY, AND SOUL.

## ABOUT THE author



## MICHAEL COLLADO

Certified Professional Fitness Expert with over 15 dedicated years in the industry. My roles in the industry has gave me the opportunities to excel in the positions of personal training, fitness department management, bootcamp instructor, corrective exercise Specialist, performance exercise specialist, and physique show prep coach.

The professional relationships I have built in the fitness, health, and medical industry in my career are the building blocks to my foundation of knowledge in addition to my field certifications I have earned. My knowledge in the field of fitness has also progressed every year. I incorporate what I have learned from my own personal experiences and my clients' successful journeys along with the latest teaching in scientific literature and the newest in fitness technology to develop a practical application customized for each individual client.

**CURRENTLY LOCATED**  
DROP ZONE FITNESS  
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Sugar Land, TX

FOR ONLINE COACHING SEND EMAILS TO  
[mrkineticfit@gmail.com](mailto:mrkineticfit@gmail.com)



# TOUGH LOVE

WRITTEN BY  
*Chris Marron*

**IN THE IMMORTAL WORDS** of arguably the greatest covert operative to ever live (Austin Powers) “Allow myself to introduce...myself”. My name is Chris Marron, Chicago native, certified Master Trainer, published fitness writer, fitness model, single dad, and all around no-nonsense guy. My intentions are always pure, and I only want the best for everyone, however my approach is not what you might expect, much less want, if I’m to be completely honest.

In not just an industry, but a society, filled with sugar-coated sunshine and rainbows where participation medals set our children up for failure, where people’s gross misuse of the word “ignorant” is by definition... ignorant, where if you don’t follow some pre-approved script of acceptable responses, you are deemed rude, a bully, a troll, or a hater. In this world, I have taken great pride in being that ironically refreshing breath of fresh air, otherwise known as reality. I never threaten, use foul language, insult, demean, condescend, or bully; I simply give people the swift kick in the rear known as **tough love**.

One thing tough love does not do is take it easy, so to remain pure to that spirit, I am going to hit the ground running with a topic that really gets under my skin.

**JUSTIFICATION.**





"MY INTENTIONS ARE ALWAYS PURE, AND I ONLY WANT THE BEST FOR EVERYONE, HOWEVER MY APPROACH IS NOT WHAT YOU MIGHT EXPECT, MUCH LESS WANT, IF I'M TO BE COMPLETELY HONEST."

When I think about justifications, and we are all guilty of this in some way or another, I hear all the things you will tell yourself to make a senseless choice seem right and all the excuses you will give to defend your poor actions. This includes really anything other than an admittance of wrongdoing. This behavior also can manifest itself through actions.

In my decade of experience in this industry, guys just think they know everything there is to know about being fit, strong, or healthy. I can't tell you the egos I have encountered over the years or how many times I have heard something along the lines of "I used to play football in college/high school" or "nah, I'm good" while they are making dumbbell bicep curls look like a Soldier Boy dance. This is defending your ridiculous ego and what you perceive to be your

"tough guy" demeanor. It is justifying why you think you don't need help or guidance. You're not fooling anyone.

When you have dug deep and found motivation and ambition to start a new health kick, have had a good couple days eating fairly healthy, did a little cardio each day, and now you figure it is perfectly fine to have "just one" cheat meal, right? Wrong! That cheat meal is quite likely to have more calories than you have expended in the previous three days, setting you back to where you started if not further. But hey, you earned it, huh? No, you just wasted the previous few days.

Or how about when you have been doing the same workout routine for months, consisting mostly of single set, total body exercises that look like they were pulled from a 1990's fitness magazine, taking breaks that last longer than the last five sets you did combined. You find you don't even break a sweat. Why? Because physiologically, there are certain things that have to happen within the body for muscles to work, strain, grow and for you to elevate your heart rate, get the blood flowing and burn calories. None of which happen with this method. But when you look in the mirror every morning, you wonder why the changes either aren't coming or are slower than a sloth playing chess. Yet, you continue doing it because this is your way of justifying the comfort zone you have adapted to being too gosh darn scared to step outside that box and take the risks you need to take.

Justifications like these happen almost every day in your life, not just when it comes to health and fitness. And the magic of the human condition is that we have choices to make within each and every situation that arises. You can choose to confront, conquer, and obliterate what you are trying to defend, or you can choose to keep justifying your poor choices, waking up each day with regret, lying to yourself, and wasting away in your comfy little box. Which are you? The next choice you make will tell you.



# What Strength

MEANS TO ME NOW

In high school I spent a glorious week of my summer at the Young Life camp in Colorado. Not only was I away from my parents, but I was having fun with friends too! Until I learned we were going rappelling. Off a cliff. Wait, what? No, see, I'm afraid of heights. I cannot. I'll puke.

Long story short, I found myself in a harness, looking into the eyes of a strange guy who assured me I was not seconds from death. I was shaking from head to toe, as I was forced to lean back ever so slightly into the unknown. I could not see behind me and I dared not look down.

"Ready? Three, two, one, go. Just one step at a time. That's it. Lean back. Relax. You're doing it."

To my surprise, I did it! I even began to enjoy a little bit of bounce as I sprung off the cliff, trusting in the ropes to keep me safe as I faced my fear.

I made it safely to solid ground and enjoyed the towering rock above me that silently seemed to congratulate me.

I've always been stubborn and strong-willed. It's a strength and a flaw combined. Maybe you're pretty set in your ways and a tad bit like me. While I do tend to be difficult, I have had unlimited opportunities that forced me to bend without breaking.

My husband and father of our four sons passed away four years ago. My heart still skips a beat to share that, as if it occurred just four days ago.

ARTICLE BY *Debbie Wilkens Baisden* ||| [www.fitwithdeb.com](http://www.fitwithdeb.com)

Debbie Wilkins Baisden is a widow-turned-newlywed mom of 4 boys (Paul 12, Bradley 11, and twins Andrew and Joshua who are 8). She enjoys doing more burpees than any of her kids, deep couch sitting with her new husband, Jason, playing with the family's three rescue dogs, and helping others look and feel their best. You can find her at [www.fitwithdeb.com](http://www.fitwithdeb.com) and [www.projectmomsanity.com](http://www.projectmomsanity.com).



STRENGTH  
GOES BEYOND  
MUSCLES.  
AND YOU  
HAVE IT.  
WHETHER OR  
NOT IS HAS  
BEEN FULLY  
EXPLORED  
AND TESTED,  
YOU HAVE IT.  
**YOU CAN DO  
HARD THINGS.**

Before my husband unexpectedly died, I was a mom who was starting to exercise simply to get my pants to not burst at the seams. I joined the gym and tried to figure out how machines worked and attended group fitness classes. I could see the benefits of getting stronger, but most of my sweating was superficial....do my pants fit and can I go eat a cookie now?

Exercise felt more like a spanking; you know, a necessary evil in order to take care of myself and all that other nonsense. I just wanted my butt lifted off the backs of my knees.

After August 2012, life flipped upside down for the boys and me. My days were a little like rappelling as I tried to face fears of the unknown future at the risk of unraveling in grief. I saw everything through a different lens and had to adjust to a new normal.

I was offered meals, well wishes, and lavish love during those initial weeks of widowhood. I am no

wilting flower, and the day my husband was discovered lifeless, I had a silent conversation with my Maker. I told God that He allowed this and that I would only stay vertical with His help every second. I asked Him to show up and be enough. And He did.

Growing up I often told my older siblings, "You're not my boss!" My independent nature proved to be an asset as I parented solo. I discovered that, just like the high school rappelling accomplishment, I can do hard things! I can...because I have to. You can do hard things as well. You are stronger than you think.

Fast-forward to today, my life is ironically spent as a fitness instructor who craves workouts and making others drenched in sweat. I challenge my clients, and I challenge myself. I wonder if I can lift this heavier weight. I wonder if I can go just three more reps. I wonder if two more minutes is doable. I have changed, because change is possible. Hate can become love, and fear can become courage.

I was strong in many ways before losing my husband, Aaron. But I am strong in even more ways now. I can lift more weights, but more importantly I can handle hardships because of my Maker. Lifting dumbbells requires physical strength, but writing an obituary demands emotional fortitude. Doing burpees requires physical strength, but walking sons to a casket challenges every ounce of your being.

Strength goes beyond muscles. And you have it. Whether or not it has been fully explored and tested, you have it. You can do hard things.



50

CONVERSATION

**FORWARD**  
talk

STRONG



**BEING STRONG  
DOESN'T MEAN  
THAT YOU NEED  
TO PRETEND TO  
BE PERFECT.**

WRITTEN BY  
*Tara A. Thatcher*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY  
*James Patrick*

I find strength in  
*my imperfections*

I find strength in  
*being vulnerable*

I find strength in  
*sharing my truth*

I find strength in  
*gratitude*

I find strength in  
*forgiveness*



STRENGTH HAS MEANT SO MANY DIFFERENT THINGS TO ME OVER THE YEARS. IT BRINGS UP SO MANY MEMORIES, POWERFUL EMOTIONS, AND TEARS. MY JOURNEY HASN'T BEEN PERFECT AND THERE ARE MORE LESSONS, CHALLENGES, AND CHANGES OUT THERE FOR ME TO EXPERIENCE ON MY WAY TO BECOME A BETTER, WISER, AND OLDER VERSION OF MYSELF.

I find strength in  
*humility*

I find strength in  
*following  
my passion*

I find strength in  
*teaching*

I find strength in  
*my body*

I find strength in  
*my mind*

I find strength in  
*my soul*

I find strength in  
*asking for help*

I find strength in  
*unconditional  
love for myself*

I find strength in  
*knowing that  
I am enough*

I didn't always respect myself, and I allowed others to also treat me with disrespect. But when I found the strength to change, I also found the strength to walk away from an abusive relationship, the strength to stick up for myself, and strength to see value in myself as a human being.

As a former competitor and United States Marine, there was a lot of value placed on physical strength. One thing that those two challenges shared was the need for mental strength. Knowing your self-worth and having a deep-seeded belief in yourself would prove more valuable than anything else.

Being strong doesn't mean that you need to pretend to be perfect. To try and show the world that you have a perfect relationship, marriage, family, career, home, car, etc. It doesn't mean bottling up all of your feelings, struggles and never sharing them. True strength is finding the courage to show that you are vulnerable. It means being brave enough to own your truth, your story, your journey. To know that sharing your truth is strength.

When you are strong in your body, mind and soul, there is nothing you can't do. The soul part is the newest addition for me. This has come through having daily practice. Finding gratitude, acceptance, and unconditional love for myself. Being comfortable and confident in my skin. There is something so beautiful about this realization. That makes me feel like the best is yet to come!

## ABOUT THE author



TARA A.  
**THATCHER**

Tara A. Thatcher is the Founder of Perfectly Prepared, a company she created to prepare and empower women in fitness to approach life with passion and a balanced perspective. As a 6 time figure and bikini winner, Tara brings her extensive experience in posing, presence, and mindset to her clients by helping them bring their best self to the competitive stage, photo shoots, publications, attaining sponsorships, and most importantly, to life. Tara is a published fitness model, writer, successful figure and bikini competitor, and has been sponsored by many supplement and clothing companies. Her clients have released fitness DVD's, placed and won local, regional, National and International competitions and attained Professional status, been published in, as well as graced the cover of top Fitness Magazines including Oxygen, STRONG Fitness Magazine, Natural Muscle, along with features on bodybuilding.com. Tara's mission is to inspire and lead women to achieve their goals through a balanced approach to life and health.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT

[www.BePerfectlyPrepared.com](http://www.BePerfectlyPrepared.com)  
or call 651.336.7521



# HOW TO BE A FIT MOM

**F**or me, being fit and being a mom are synonymous. Mainly because my children are the reason that I even took an interest in fitness. Before I had children I did not appreciate or understand what my body was capable of doing. Giving birth opened my eyes to just how amazing the human body is. I had new reasons to care about my health. I wanted my children to see a mom that loved and valued herself. I wanted to be a good example to them. What are we teaching our children if we constantly neglect ourselves as moms?

I'll give the best analogy I heard in regards to parenting and making yourself a priority. Remember on the airplane when the flight attendants explain how to put on your oxygen mask? Also remember how they tell you to be sure to put your own mask on before you try to help someone else with theirs? It makes perfect sense. So, then why do we have such a hard time doing this? Maybe it's because anytime

a mom tries to do something for herself, she can't escape the "mom guilt". This mom guilt we feel, is it self-imposed or actually brought on by family and society? Well-meaning family members may not realize their little comments might be hurtful. There are ways around this "mom guilt" that we all feel from time to time. Here are my tips and words of encouragement to any mom wanting to have it all.

*Leanna Baucum* ||| [www.leannajb.com](http://www.leannajb.com)

Leanna Baucum is an NPC bikini competitor, mother of two children, wife, and Health & Wellness major. Her nutrition and fitness blog Crazy, Healthy, and Happy can be found online at [www.leannajb.com](http://www.leannajb.com).





## SET REALISTIC GOALS FOR YOURSELF

Setting a goal should be the first step you take in your fitness journey or body transformation. And don't take the easy way out or rely on a "quick fix". This is going to take time! But anything worth having usually does.

## INVEST IN YOURSELF

Buy a nice set of headphones. Buy yourself some cute, comfortable workout clothes. Join a gym. Set aside the money, cut back somewhere else, and invest in your own health.

At the end of the day we all have different challenges, but we all have the same number of hours. How badly do you want it? You don't have time, or you make the time. You can either make changes or make excuses. The good news is that being a fit mom isn't only meant for certain people. Any mom can be fit. Your body is an incredible machine! It created a perfect, adorable, little human being that you love more than you ever thought you could love another person. If it can do that, trust me, you can get it back in shape!

## MAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF

See working out as a reward rather than a punishment. Demand time for yourself and demand that everyone in your household respect your time.

## KNOW YOUR WORTH

Know your value and understand that spending time on just you isn't selfish, but necessary.

## ACCEPT THAT IT'S TOUGH

Like, really tough! Like all things in motherhood, this too is a constantly juggling act. But you know what? You're superwoman, you got this!

## STOP COMPARING YOURSELF TO OTHER MOMS

Don't think that just because you didn't get as much done in the day as Suzie Homemaker doesn't mean that you aren't rocking it as a mom.





#moveyourlifeforward

