

A Simple Guide to Exercise Safety: What You Don't Know CAN Hurt You

Three sample chapters including preface (very important to understand what the book is about) and the first and second chapter.

Preface

Admittedly, I was feeling just a bit nervous about publishing this book because it seems I have virtually *no competition*. And while that may seem like a good thing, it caused me to question myself initially...

Does anyone actually search for this information? More importantly, does anyone even know they *need* to search for this information?

From the research I'd done so far, it sure didn't look like it. In fact, it seems that the majority of people out there search for topics about quick weight loss, how to get great abs and the newest celebrity diet. Virtually NO ONE searches for exercise safety.

This concerns me.

So, whether or not the "marketplace" has deemed this subject worthy of high search engine rankings or not, I have to get this information out there. It is my responsibility as a fellow human being, fitness writer and professional.

In a society filled with the glamorous images of celebrities whose imperfections have either been airbrushed away or publicly ridiculed, the notion that we need to look a certain way to be accepted is a message that has done more harm than good. We look for "experts" in the field of health and fitness to help guide us in the right direction.

We watch television shows that demonstrate extreme activities to educate us on how to lose weight without taking into consideration that there are teams of medical professionals on set to implement lifesaving practices if necessary.

We join fitness facilities and take classes without thinking to screen the instructors or the facility itself to see if they are following current and thorough safety protocol. We purchase "miracle" products that offer misleading claims of benefits without effort.

The reason we do this is plain and simple:

We Are Unaware

Most of us don't know what to look for in a personal trainer or exercise class instructor. Most people hire a personal trainer with the assumption that they are hiring someone well trained,

knowledgeable and who has their best interest at heart. But, what if I told you that this isn't always the case?

We are so quick to look for the fastest way to reach our weight loss and fitness goals, but no one ever thinks to investigate what to look for in a fitness facility. Many of us don't even have a clue as to how to protect ourselves from harm by following a few simple, yet hidden rules that if left unknown, could lead to injury or even death.

Believe it or not, it happens more often than you know.

I can almost guarantee that you will find something in this book that you were completely oblivious to about exercise safety. Perhaps you have even broken a rule or two without realizing it. If you did, I'm thankful you're here now to learn and hopefully expose others to the tips and examples I will share in this book about how to stay safe in an industry that is meant to create a lifestyle consisting of empowerment and well-being.

We all want to be informed about the risks involved when it comes to our finances and relationships... why should it be any different when it comes to our bodies during exercise?

You've probably never thought of it that way have you?

Well, I'm known for having a rather unique perspective on things. The truth is...no one will ever have your best interests at heart more than you will. This is a valuable philosophy that I hold near to my heart and one which I hope you'll want to integrate into your decision making process, as well. And yes, you can thank me for this later.

Just know this...

YOU are your most valuable asset to yourself and your loved ones.

That's right! It is up to you to wake up and take responsibility for your choices. It is up to each and every one of us to take care of ourselves and serve as living examples of awareness and accountability. And, that means being aware of the consequences of the choices you make, even when they are choices meant for your own benefit.

If you have never actually given the subject of exercise safety any thought, then you should thank your lucky stars that you came across this book. It could very well be the lifesaving tool you never realized you needed.

Chapter 1

Assuming Personal Responsibility for Our Role in Society

"America's health care system is in crisis precisely because we systematically neglect wellness and prevention."

~ Tom Harkin

Unless you've been completely oblivious to the news (which isn't necessarily a bad thing for the sake of inner-peace), I'm certain you're aware of the obvious differences of opinions about our current healthcare system and its recent developments. Many people may not agree with me but, I'm going to propose an option not popularly discussed in mainstream media that, if implemented properly, could solve a lot of our healthcare problems.

But, before I go on, let me clarify that the author of this book (that would be me), isn't going to discuss a political opinion one way or the other. For that, you'll have to look elsewhere.

This book isn't about politics. This book was written as a tool to help others take personal responsibility for the way we treat ourselves. *The reality is, the lifestyles we choose to live create a direct pathway to the future of our planet and as far as I'm concerned... human beings in general.*

Healthcare costs are high...

Obesity is taking over our society...

The general public is misinformed about how to take care of their bodies...

This is the sad, but true fact: obesity related illnesses are taking over our lives and killing us slowly, but surely. Adult onset diabetes is affecting children. Parents are realizing that they may outlive their kids and we, as a nation, are feeling lazy, tired, scared, angry and worst of all, helpless.

Helplessness typically leads to desperation.

Desperation usually leads to one of two ways of coping with the situation.

Coping DOES NOT fix the problem!

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Coping Skill #1: Fix the problem as quickly as possible by any means necessary.

Carelessness and ignorance are usually the unfortunate by-products of anxiety driven coping techniques. Unfortunately, this usually translates to using extreme measures to solve the issue without any real thought given to the consequences that may follow, as a result of hasty actions. It's kind of like slapping a band-aid on a gushing dam: it works for a while, but soon enough the problem is back and worse than before.

Bigger problems down the road are almost always a guarantee when coming from a place of emotional turmoil. I mean think about it: how can someone make a logical and informed decision when their emotions are dictating their actions?

One of the most sensible quotes I have heard on this subject comes from Dr. Wayne Dyer who says, "You can't solve a problem with the same mind that created it". I couldn't agree more.

Coping Skill #2: Denial.

What we don't acknowledge doesn't exist, right? Wrong!

The fact is, denial leads to even further refusal to face whatever it is that ails us, all the while paving the way for our problems to continue to strengthen beneath the surface. Additional weight gain, addictions and increases in debt are just a few examples of what occurs if we turn and look the other way when the pain of our reality becomes too much to bear.

Owning the part we play in our own misery may be tough at first. We feel trapped and unable to take control of our situation, certainly we did not put ourselves there on purpose! However, since the pain is already present, you might be surprised at how easy it is to acknowledge it and ask for enlightenment about the role we've played in our own unhappiness. This truly is the first step towards taking personal responsibility and eventual self-empowerment.

Obesity is a painful reality. One cruel remark is sometimes all it takes to motivate someone to go to extreme measures to lose the weight and this is where accidents and fatalities can happen. This is also where we are falsely led to believe that obesity itself is the problem.

It isn't. The thoughts and perceptions we have about ourselves and our role in the world are responsible for everything in our lives, including obesity. Once the focus becomes geared toward creating inner-peace and self-empowerment, we then have our own best interests at heart in addition to the best interests of society as a whole.

When we refocus the efforts of weight loss toward lifelong well-being instead, we become careful. We do our research to ensure that we are armed with credible information to reach a place of optimal health for the good of ourselves and those who surround us.

As A Result, We Are No Longer Careless and Desperate

We are in no hurry and we take the time to do what is necessary to ensure our safety with our exercise and nutrition activities. We are inspired by the idea of living our best lives!

And we simply go on and live in our slim, strong and fit bodies once and for all while being an inspiration to everyone who needs us to help them do the same.

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You see, there is a lot of misinformation out there about health and fitness.

This has been the case for decades and since it's profitable, it isn't going away anytime soon. Fad diets, unsafe fitness practices and extreme weight loss attempts are dominating the internet and entertainment industries. **People are becoming personal trainers without an understanding of what it takes to truly understand the human body and how to put it through the stress of exercise safely and with proper structure and screening.**

You, my valued reader and friend... Just may need to lose weight. You may have taken an exercise class that was too intense for your level of fitness. You might have hired a trainer that didn't ask for your medical history or take your blood pressure. You may have endured boot camp while chewing gum the whole time...

I know I certainly have.

Before I knew any better I had attempted all kinds of crazy weight loss methods. Cutting out pivotal food groups, embarking on high intensity workouts as a sedentary individual and eating disorders ruled my life in the past.

And I'm certain that many of you have done the same.

I'm here to urge you to chill for a moment and to consciously remove the anxiety and desperation from your desire to get fit and healthy. Understand that what you're really looking for is...

INNER-PEACE.

You want to take charge of your life and how you perceive the world. You want to get an understanding of what you want your contribution to society to be. You want to be part of the solution to the healthcare crisis by not needing to get medical help for diseases you don't have to suffer with. You want to fuel yourself with foods that give you the nutrients to maintain optimal health and partake in fitness routines that offer safe yet challenging strength promoting benefits.

Or, at least I hope you do. Remember: if you decide that you are worth being well, worth feeling good about yourself not because of the result, but because of the time and care you place on the journey to well-being itself, **you will become the type of human being that lives their life with their head held high and their self-respect and dignity obvious to others.**

And oh yeah, you'll enjoy the clothes shopping, last minute vacations and dating opportunities as well. But, you've got to live long enough to reap those rewards.

I want you to put the time and energy into doing some of your own research and investigating who is worthy of your time, trust and money in regard to hiring a professional to help you get fit and healthy. I want you to be armed with information about what to do, what not to do and what to look for, whether someone helps you with this process or you do it on your own.

And lastly, I want you to be an asset to this planet we all share. We, as a nation, need people just like you. You chose to pick up this book and read this far because you care about your health and the contribution your well-being can make to our society. As you take charge of your health you help decrease our healthcare costs and act as an inspiration to those who watch you, whether you realize it or not.

With the tools that I am going to equip you with in this book, you will become informed about the unspoken (until now) rules to exercise safety. You will enlighten those you care about to do the same. You will be able to safely create the new beginning that you've been looking for.

I am here to provide you with valuable content about what to pay attention to in regard to exercise safety while giving you credible resources that will expand on my advice. All I ask is that you remember that your safety comes first.

Now before I close out this chapter on assuming personal responsibility, I must point out one more important subject...

It's no secret that we have become what I call a "litigation happy society". I am certain that many of us have heard about lawsuits taking place for numerous reasons - some of which aren't exactly based in truth.

Well it is no different when it comes to health and fitness.

While it is my honor to enlighten you about what to look for in a personal trainer or fitness facility, it is your responsibility to be a person of character.

You should know that nowadays, lawsuits are requiring people to be responsible for their own basic safety when it comes to exercising...especially in a gym. You can't simply bang your head on a piece of equipment and then sue the facility for having metal at head height. In fact, there are guidelines being set forth by ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials) in an effort to reduce the amount of frivolous lawsuits that have taken place.

Take charge of your well-being. Follow the rules of the facility. Read the signs that accompany the piece of equipment you are about to use and if you have any questions, ask.

Having a qualified personal trainer instruct you on how to properly maneuver your way around a gym or any piece of fitness equipment is an ideal way to avoid unnecessary injury. I discuss this in detail in chapter 10.

The tone and philosophies in this book are designed to encourage you to become an individual of personal empowerment and integrity. This is how we live our best lives and create a community in which we all cooperate with one another and therefore, thrive.

To sum up this chapter on personal responsibility...

"Preservation of health is a duty. However, few people seem to be conscious of such a concept as physical morality".

~ Hippocrates

Thank you for taking the time to read this book.

Chapter 2

Exercise, the General Public and Special Populations

"Physical fitness is not only one of the most important keys to a healthy body; it is the basis of dynamic and creative intellectual activity."

~ John F. Kennedy

Exercise offers numerous benefits. It keeps us strong, fit, healthy and yes, slim. A quality fitness regimen can enhance the relationship we have with ourselves and others. It can also free us from some of our medications, keep us mentally sharp and increase our self-esteem. Exercise is one of the cornerstones to living a long, healthy and fulfilling life.

What most of you aren't enlightened about, however, is how to go about incorporating an exercise program into your life in a safe and structured manner. It's difficult enough to get motivated to work out. I mean, so many of us find excuses for why we can't, such as not having enough time, being too tired after a long day of work or having 'other' things to do.

So, wouldn't it be nice to know, that once you finally make the decision to get healthy, that you are going about it the right way?

These days, it seems that many people within the general population have become part of what is known as a "special population." In the health related field, this is a term used to describe those with medical conditions, many of which are preventable. As someone in a "special population", you may need more specific and thorough screening before engaging in an exercise program.

Since so many of us take medications; suffer from various ailments such as diabetes, high cholesterol and back pain; or have genetic predispositions to certain illnesses, more and more people are falling under this category. However, that shouldn't prevent you from engaging in a healthy lifestyle or exercise program as long as you are under a doctor's supervision.

Some examples of Special Populations are:

- Obesity/Eating Disorders
- Pregnancy
- Hypertension
- Diseases or Illnesses such as Diabetes, Cancer, Fibromyalgia/Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/End-Stage Renal Disease, Osteoporosis, Non-Specific Low Back Pain, COPD, Parkinson's Disease, MS, and more
- Children/Senior Populations
- Stroke/Heart Attack Patients
- Arthritis and Shoulder/Hip/Knee Replacement Patients

Everyone deserves the right to live their best lives. If you have connected with this fact and have made the decision to get fit, you will want to be armed with the knowledge you need to make sure your efforts are acting in your own best interests.

While exercise brings an abundance of positive aspects to our lives, working out still involves risks. I have witnessed people breaking some of the rules I am about to share with you. Had I not been educated, I simply wouldn't have noticed.

**One false move could create irreconcilable damage,
so isn't it worth it to be informed?**