

The 5 pillars of Health

1) Thoughts

- **Your thoughts are PARAMOUNT**, and will drive you towards achieving (or not achieving) your personal goals. Without positive thinking and motivation it is likely that excuses and a negative mindset will get in the way of you making the necessary lifestyle changes to attain true health and fitness.
- Ensure you have a **clear vision** of what you want to achieve. Visualise on a daily basis what it will feel like to have the body you desire. Write down your goals, or find a picture of a healthy body that you want to have, and look at and it regularly to gain inspiration.
- Don't allow criticism to enter your mind. Give yourself encouragement for how well you are doing, and if you do slip up don't let this dampen your mood. Find the motivation to keep striving to achieve your goals, and **take responsibility for yourself** and the choices you make.

2) Nutrition

- This is probably the most confusing topic for people, but it doesn't need to be. Food need not be complicated; we simply must choose to eat more in line with the way nature intended. Make the choice to **eat whole, fresh foods** preferably sustainable and organic, which are free of additives, preservatives and pesticides. Buy meat and eggs that come from, pasture fed animals as opposed to confined, unhealthy and grain fed animals. The quality of the food we eat is so important to our health and the prevention of disease. If you eat food from poor sources, the chemicals within these foods will be first processed by the liver. If your liver is overworked, does not recognise the toxin or cannot break down the toxin, these toxins will eventually be stored in the fat cells within our bodies.
 - If you are having a salad make your own salad dressing (don't use store bought heavily processed, sugar and chemical laden dressings)
 - If you want to make a sauce, find out the ingredients and make it yourself instead of pouring one out of a jar. Always choose natural food over processed food.
- **Avoid eating processed foods**. These foods have been heavily manufactured, denatured and laden with chemicals and preservatives to the point where they do not nourish the body or resemble real food. You will know if a food is processed if its ingredients label looks like a science experiment. This includes fast food! These foods will hinder the progress to your goals.

- **Too much Carbohydrate will cause you to put on weight.** A Diet high in carbohydrate and sugar (eg bread, cakes, chocolates, chips, fast food, alcohol, and sweet fruits) actually encourages the body to store more fat and thus prevents you from losing weight. Minimise your carbohydrate intake if you want to lose weight. If fat loss is your main goal, keep Carbs within 1g per kg of body mass (BM) for 6/7 days & consuming animal products & seasonal vegetables like we were designed will greatly improve your chances of having the summer body you are after
- **Fat isn't all Bad!** Eating healthy fats will actually assist you in weight loss by promoting the healing and rebalancing of your hormonal system, by satisfying your hunger for longer and preventing you from overeating. Eat healthy fats in the form of meat from organic and pasture-fed animals, raw butter and dairy products, free-range eggs, olive oil, avocados, raw nuts (soaked and dried), coconuts and seafood. Avoid trans fats and hydrogenated vegetable oils.

3) Hydration

- **Water is vital for life**, however many of us are not drinking near enough for what our bodies need. Juices, soft-drinks, and caffeine are not a substitute for the water your body fundamentally needs to function adequately. These drinks can further dehydrate the body and contribute to weight gain.
- Aim to drink **0.033 x your body weight, in Litres of water per day**. Add a pinch of unprocessed sea salt to your water to help maintain electrolyte balance, improve energy levels and prevent excess urination. Use a water filter which removes harmful chlorine, chemicals, bacteria and heavy metal from your water.

4) Stress Management/ Balance

- In our modern reality our lives are becoming ever more stressful, whether it be financial, family, relationship, health or work related. Unfortunately stress can be very detrimental to our health and wellbeing, and ongoing exposure to stress can lead to adrenal exhaustion, weight issues, a weakened immune system, plus a myriad of other mental and physical problems. It is important that we find a balance between activity and rest within our lives.
- **Sleep with the sun.** Try to go to bed by 10:30pm each night, and have 8 hours of sleep to allow the body to repair and replenish itself.
- Perform **regular relaxation and meditation**. It is important that we take time out of our busy schedules to reconnect with ourselves, eg by going for walks in nature to help de-stress from everyday pressures.
- **Deep Slow Breathing** from the diaphragm is a good way of managing your stress by calming your nervous system, and can be incorporated into your relaxation and meditation.

5) Movement

- ***Movement is an important part of life.*** When we fail to move our bodies as they should, we fall into a sedentary lifestyle that is harmful to our physical and mental health.
- ***Perform regular excise*** 3-5 times per week with our Outdoor Group Training classes. Perform gentle exercise like walking, stretching or yoga in between the higher intensity training.
- ***Do not run yourself into the Ground!*** Exercise should be something that ultimately gives you energy rather than depleting you. Avoid overdoing cardio exercise, which leaves your energy stores at a deficit. Sometimes backing off the intensity is necessary to avoid burning yourself out, particularly if you have other stressors in your life. Our Group Training classes target all levels of fitness, and you can choose the level of difficulty in relation to your energy levels and ability on the day.
- ***Avoid Overdoing Cardio Exercise:*** Whoever said that long arduous cardio training is the only way to exercise and to lose fat? Lots of people are still very misinformed about cardio training, and don't know that excess aerobic exercise is a huge stressor, being catabolic on the body and tissues which often results in muscle imbalances and injury. Overdoing cardio exercise can be counterproductive in achieving a healthy body by slowing your metabolic rate and elevating cortisol levels which actually *promotes the re-storage of body fat*. A mixture of Interval training, strength training and cardio is the way to go, which balances aerobic and resistance training to boost your metabolism, improve muscle strength, enhance cardiovascular performance, and improve insulin sensitivity.
- ***Don't be afraid of Weight Training:*** I know a lot of women are afraid of training with weights because they think it's going to bulk them up and make you look manly. Females naturally have much lower levels of testosterone, a muscle-building hormone, and will not have the ability to bulk up like a male. Weight training actually boosts your metabolic rate for an extended period of time for up to 72 hours after training, far greater than that of cardio exercise. Resistance training also increases mineral bone density, improves cardiovascular health and efficiency, improves joint integrity and stability, and will assist in weight loss, toning and strengthening the body. Don't underestimate the benefits of weight training!