Me

8 Common Fitness Plan Mistakes and Fixes
How to hack a fitness plan that works for YOU

We all kick start an exercise regime with the best of intentions, but often we fall off the wagon within a week or two. Sound familiar? And this has nothing to do with what exercise you choose to do (although if you start CrossFit, I'm sure we'll hear about it).

We're talking about a few common mistakes we make that prevent us from creating a fitness program that will last. Find out what they are and what you can do to prevent them from letting you build a lifestyle and habit that will benefit you for years to come.

Mistake no 5: You strat on a Monday

Ever come back to work from a holiday on a Monday and then by the time you get to Friday you have about as much energy as when you finished your Evalex? Yeah, it's not a vibe and starting a workout regime is no different. We're trying to keep the motivation going and exhaustion is counterproductive.

Fix:

Aim for two workouts in your first week. Maybe Wednesday and Saturday. Maybe Friday and Sunday. Maybe even, Wednesday and Thursday. But no Monday... we just talked about this!

Mistake no 6: You don't create an awesome exercise environment

Microsoft has the quietest room in the world that most people can't be in for longer than 45min. Why? Because you can hear your own heartbeat, blood flowing and bones grinding, and you start going mad. We don't need to go to Microsoft HQ for that, we can just do a 5km run without any music.
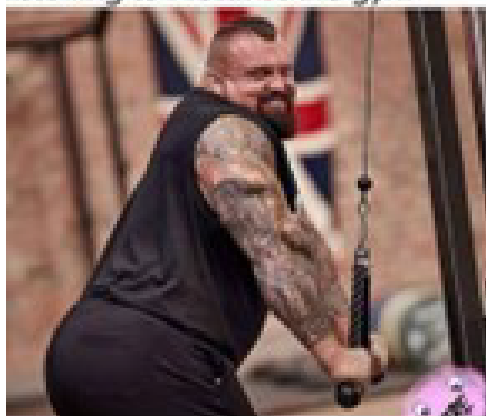
Fix:

Music, podcasts, YouTube videos, Netflix. Figure out what makes your brain happy and distracts it from the pain of working out and do that while you exercise. It's been shown to increase stamina, put you in a better mood, push through fatigue and increase endurance. So, crank the tunes... science says so.

Mistake no 7: You don't set a goal

Don't we love to compare ourselves to others? And make sure we feel really inferior about not being able to complete the Marathon des Sables (a six day 250km race through the Sahara Desert) because the Comrades just wasn't enough.

Fix:

Don't go by anyone else's goals. The person who can bench press 150kg probably can't run a marathon and vice versa.

Not that either of those must be your goal. Your goal could be to plank for 3min (which will be the longest 3min of your life), be able to consistently exercise 4 times a week, to go on an amazing 10km hike in the Drakensburg. Whatever your goal is, no matter how simple it may seem, make that your motivation to try harder and figure out the gradual steps you need to take to help you achieve it.

Mistake no 8: You don't prevent injuries

"I was working out so often but then I got injured and had to take 6 weeks off" is an all-too-common phrase. And an injury can really set your progress back and disrupt your flow, even if it only puts you out for a week.

Fix:

So many things can help prevent injuries. Warming up properly: this gets the blood flowing to your joints and prepares your muscles for the workout. Stretching: this gets your mobility going and prevents your body parts from compensating for other less mobile ones (like getting a lower back injury because your ham strings are too tight). Correct form: ensuring you're in the right position to perform a movement at all times (if you can only do two repetitions of an exercise with the right form that's better than doing ten incorrectly- that's what the dudes in the weights section at the gym are doing while staring at themselves in the mirror... maybe). Not overexercising: your recovery days are just as important as your training days, mentally and physically (there's a nasty thing called overtraining syndrome that you want to avoid).
These are true for all forms of exercise. They are just as important for running as they are for functional training or swimming.

In general, creating a successful fitness regime is about figuring what sort of