

a prescription for procrastinators

"My life is too busy so I don't have time to work out." "I need to lose weight before I can start exercising." "I don't exercise because I'm afraid I'll look foolish at the gym."

Do any of these excuses for not exercising sound familiar? When you get past the different excuses, they really all come down to the same thing: procrastination. Everyone procrastinates to some degree, especially when it comes to sticking to a regular exercise program.

So, what can you do if you want to stop procrastinating and make exercise a healthy habit? Writer Julie Anne Eason, who specializes in health and fitness topics, gives suggestions drawing from the work of Linda Sapadin, PhD, a psychologist and the author of *It's About Time! The Six Styles of Procrastination and How to Overcome Them* (Penguin Books 1996). Below are explanations of four of the most common styles Sapadin identifies and tips for dealing with them.



The Worrier

The worrier is the king of "what if": "What if people laugh at me?" "What if I drop the weights?" Worriers are very concerned with what other people think of them. They tend to spend hours agonizing over which clothes make them look fat, and they'll avoid the beach or the gym because they don't want to be seen in a bathing suit or shorts.

Worrier Tips: Try to identify what's behind your fear of failure. Then, when

the "what ifs" creep in, ask yourself to take your worry to its logical conclusion. For example, the response to the question "What happens if I drop the weights?" might be, "I will pick them up again and laugh it off." By forcing yourself to answer these kinds of questions, you will likely realize that your fear is not that big a deal.



The Dreamer

Dreamers love to plan and fantasize about getting in shape and losing weight. Unfortunately, their dreams are only vague ideas with little or no follow-through. They need to learn how to set specific goals, using concrete numbers and dates. Dreamers tend to have short attention spans and are easily distracted.

Dreamer Tips: Try hiring a personal trainer to keep you on track, and design an exercise plan that focuses attention on the daily steps you must take to reach your specific goal.



The Perfectionist

Perfectionists want all the circumstances to be perfect before they begin any fitness program. They need the right shoes, the right gym, the right trainer and the right time of day. Deep down, they know the world is

not perfect. The stars will never align to provide the perfect environment, so they'll never have to take any real or personal responsibility for achieving their goals.

Perfectionist Tips: Do your best to avoid "all-or-nothing" thinking regarding exercise. Don't tell yourself, "I must do 30 minutes of cardio every day." Instead, say, "I may choose to do my cardio workout in a 30-minute session, or I can break it up into three 10-minute segments throughout the day." Brainstorm several exercise alternatives to choose from, so if one choice won't work for you one day, you have another option to fall back on.



The Overdoer

Overdoers genuinely try to be all things to all people. As a result, they tend to put their own needs last, including their exercise time.

Overdoer Tips: Create a contingency fitness plan for yourself. If you can't get to your scheduled exercise at the gym, plan to exercise along with videos at home whenever you get overextended, so you don't miss your daily workout. ■

courtesy of

Coach Ken Johnson

Coach Ken Johnson
coachken@3-fitness.com
www.3-fitness.com