

THE PRIMAL BLUEPRINT FITNESS PYRAMID

Functional fitness, stress/rest balance, anti-aging benefits

PLAY

Spontaneous outdoor physical fun—every day!



RECOVER

Sleep, relax, be intuitive, avoid chronic patterns



SPRINT

Several 8-20 second bursts

Every 7-10 days, when 100% energized



LIFT HEAVY THINGS

Brief, intense resistance exercises

2 times per week for 10-30 minutes



MOVE FREQUENTLY

- More general daily movement (Avoid prolonged inactivity)
- Cardio workouts at “180 - age” heart rate (Cycle, hike, walk/jog, water activities)
- Flexibility/mobility (Pilates, yoga, tai chi, gymnastics, dancing, dynamic rolling/stretching/therapy work)



Fitness

The Primal Blueprint Perspective

Gone are the days of having to workout hard 4, 5, or 6 times per week.

Exercise should be considered as a method of achieving functional fitness, strength and mobility. Try not connecting fitness with weight loss. Related to weight loss, it is more important to eat well than to exercise. Many people including me, believed that exercise was the key to health and therefore required it to be highest priority. Working out 4, 5 or 6 days a week, combining strength training with long hard cardio sessions obtained a free pass on the dietary choices and portioning. Nothing could be further from the truth. Chronic exercise at high intensity for long periods of time can and usually causes negative health outcomes. That model is not an indicator of organ health, lipid levels (good vs bad cholesterols), or insulin sensitivity (how effective your body is at utilizing carbohydrates for energy). Please stop associating chronic exercise with weight loss. It didn't work for me and if anything, it impacted my overall health in a negative way. ([read My Health Story](#) and [My Heart Path](#)) Even though I looked fit and strong on the outside, the inside told another story.

The general public, if asked to identify the proportions that exercise and diet are associated to weight loss and weight management, the answer will likely be 80% exercise and 20% diet. Again, as with my former self, that's the mindset that feels; if you work-out hard and long enough, weight loss will happen. Calories in vs Calories out. When in fact it is more likely the opposite. 80% of our weight loss and weight management goals are associated with diet and 20% exercise. Let's try not to link weight loss with fitness.

Fitness as a Lifestyle

Try to look at your fitness activities as part of your overall health experience, not a chore that needs to be done no matter how you are feeling.

Movement and exercise do your body and mind good. Exercise commonly leads to only modest weight loss, people who move more see a range of health benefits, including improvements in blood pressure, lowering of triglycerides, plus reduced risk of type 2 diabetes, stroke, and heart disease. Also, there are several studies showing reduced risk of Alzheimer, dementia and cognitive ability due to more daily movement, showing that physical activity helps considerably in preventing age-related diseases

Move Frequently (But at slow pace)

General Daily Movement:

The bottom of the Primal Fitness Pyramid is move frequently. One of the biggest areas of fitness that gets neglected by chronic exercisers is frequent movement. They are of the notion, if I exercise hard for a relatively short period of time I can sit on my butt for the rest of the day without issue. Not so, our day should be filled with general movement to maximize health benefits. Standing, turning, walking, bending are all activities that keep our bodies mobile and functional.

Cardio Training 180 – Age:

Regardless of the activity you choose; try to stay in the [Aerobic](#) zone throughout. Walking/jogging, hiking, riding bike, swimming, paddling, etc., work to maintain a heart rate in the fat burning range of 180 – age ([MAF Heartrate](#)). These types of exercises should be 2 – 5hrs per week.

It is fine to work for a breakthrough [Anerobic](#) zone training session from time to time. Just make sure you feel fantastic prior, and that you allow adequate recovery after. I would recommend once per week for activities of high intensity and keep the duration below 1hr.

Flexibility and Mobility:

There are many great activities you can perform to maintain your flexibility and mobility; yoga, tai-chi, dancing dynamic stretching, etc. Static stretching is better performed after an exercise activity rather than before.

Lift Heavy Things:

Primal Essential Movements

Resistance training is very important. You are able to enjoy life to its fullest when you are fit and strong. The duration of these activities should be relatively infrequent and for short duration at high intensity. Two or three times per week for 7 – 30 min.

Each of the following videos features Mark Sisson's explaining and demonstrating the Primal Essential Movements. Please watch for a better understanding of technique and progression.

[Push-ups](#)

[Pull-ups](#)

[Squats](#)

[Planks](#)

Sprinting

In the words of Mark Sisson, “nothing cuts you up like sprinting”. It is a maximum effort activity that needs to be conducted correctly and safely to be effective and to prevent injury.

Beginners to high intensity exercise, who are overweight, or suffer from limited mobility can conduct sprint sessions on cardio machines; stationary bike, rowing machine, stair machine, or elliptical machine. Sprinting up a steep hill may be possible due to offering lower impact compared to flat running.

The following video link featuring Mark Sisson, outlines how to effectively add sprinting to your fitness plan

[Sprinting](#)

Keep moving 😊

Before starting or modifying any exercise or fitness plan, consult your doctor to ensure it is safe for you to do so.

Exercise is very important to have in our lives coupled with good dietary practices. Cardio and strength training, when performed in a healthy way, can contribute to enviable health and longevity outcomes.

Just remember to use exercise as its intended and not rely on it to give you that so called “free pass” to consume all types of food without reservation. That would likely lead to unfortunate health concerns that could be avoided with aligned fitness, health and dietary practices.

Living Aligned Health Coach Service

Thank you for taking the time read this post. If you find any of the information valuable and would like to find out more information regarding the benefits a health coach can provide, or if you are interested in setting up a consultation. Contact Vern Gorman at livingalignedhc@gmail.com or through the website www.livingalignedhealthcoach.com

