

SPRING INTO SHAPE

By Kimberly Feeny

This morning I woke up (yet again) to snow on the ground. I had to bundle up, shovel my sidewalk, clean off my car... again. With the winter weather that most of the country has experienced this year, many of us have lost track of how many times we have had a morning like that. Mornings spent digging out and shivering have made it a challenge to keep health and fitness goals on track. Believe it or not though, Spring is coming, and with it a renewed opportunity for focus and motivation. So, here are a few tips that help me spring back into shape annually:

1. **Set simple, realistic goals weekly.** I have a bad habit of being overly optimistic on what I can and will accomplish in any given day or week. Setting unrealistic goals leads to setting myself up for failure. Even if I do manage to have a very productive week, it can still be disheartening when I fall short of those unrealistic goals. To avoid that pitfall and help you out of your winter rut, instead of saying you'll get in 5 workouts, make 2 or 3 workouts your goal. You'll be more likely to accomplish that goal and accomplishing your goal will motivate you to keep going and build on your success.
2. **Prepare today for tomorrow.** Pack for the gym or set out your clothes the night before. Prep your breakfast, juice, or smoothie and pack your lunch before you go to bed. This will take some of the stress out of your morning and make getting out of the door (to the gym) more

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manageable. Even if hitting the gym in the morning isn't your thing, starting your day off on the good foot can make it less likely that you'll skip the gym later in the day.

3. **Buddy-up or sign up for a class.** When you make a commitment to a friend or a teacher, you'll feel more compelled to follow through. They rely on you and that'll make it less likely that you'll skip a workout.
4. **Try something new.** Whether it's a new smoothie recipe or a new class at the gym, do something different. Hike a different path, try a new piece of equipment or read a new book on health & wellness. The new information, change and challenge will add some excitement and help you stay interested, motivated and invigorated.
5. **Get outside when you can.** If you get a day with even marginal weather, try to take advantage of it! Do you play tennis? Basketball? Softball? No? You can do something as simple as taking a walk or a run around your neighborhood. Try something special and different like renting a canoe or heading to some outdoor batting cages. The sun and wind will break you out of that winter funk and get you ready for summer!



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