

# THE ULTIMATE WELLNESS LIFESTYLE

Getting Ripped and Helping Others Achieve Their Fitness Goals



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## Introduction

There is no template, formula, or easy "one size fits all" approach to wellness and optimal fitness. There is no "right" way to get the body of your dreams. The only thing that works is what works for you, and please note that the word "work" is going to be used a lot in this book. Why? Because you cannot pop a pill or sip a starvation diet shake and get into good shape. To be fit means you have to commit to the work that it's going to take to get there.

"Great," you say "I'm up for the challenge." That is music to my ears, but let's not get ahead of ourselves. The biggest hurdle to getting into tip-top condition is knowing how to start, and how to do it right. That, in fact, is THE major challenge for most people because they don't know where to start or even where to go once they have enjoyed some initial success.

Take me for example, I decided to get back into shape and started using a workout known as the P90X workout. After finishing the first round, I wasn't as "ripped" as I had hoped. I wondered if I had hit a plateau. I began learning more about creating hybrid workout routines and discovered the solutions that worked for me. I also learned that I had to "shake things up", literally. If I was going to get the body I wanted, I had to get myself leaner and then bulk up the muscles, but without the help of a high fat diet. This was possible through specially formulated fitness shakes in combination with my targeted cardio and resistance discipline.

Have I fallen upon the magical formula? Shakes and optimized exercise? No. As I said, there is no magic formula...there is only the solution that works for you. In this guide, I am going to talk to you about the work and the eating habits (including shakes and supplements), that work for me, and by doing so I am going to show you how to help others achieve the same goals.

You will see that there is a process that will work for everyone. It looks like this:

1. Establish goals for yourself.
2. Optimize your diet.
3. Use the right supplements for you.
4. Work with someone who understands your specific goals and lifestyle, and begin following a strong routine for fitness.
5. Stick with your coach to continue along your journey, and begin reaching out to help others.

You can see that this approach can not only give you the body you've always dreamed of, but it might also give you a whole new career in the bargain. Whether you want to just get yourself into the best shape of your life, or you want to be fit and then become a certified coach is not really that important. The most important thing that I hope you will take from this guide is that you can achieve wellness, get a strong and healthy body, and learn how your experiences of tapping into your own motivation can be used to get others as excited about their fitness as you.

In fact...by the end of this book you will stop thinking of your fitness routines as "workouts". The word "work" is going to actually disappear from your vocabulary, because eventually you will no longer view the process as labor, work, or effort. You will view it as something you love to do. Something that makes you stronger and fitter than you could possibly imagine. Your exercise and eating routines will become a journey that you enjoy, an essential part of your day, and which will inspire you to want to help others as well.

If you're ready, let's get started!

# Chapter One

## Understanding the Balance

We've all seen the muscle builders with their six-pack abs and their enormous "ropes" popping out of their biceps. They are amazingly defined human beings who dedicate many hours to sculpting their bodies. They are truly "ripped". We have also seen the people with the toned, lean, and long muscles that are the hallmark of professional athletes. These people are also dedicated to their bodies, but they don't have to spend the greater portion of their free time in a gym each day. Many of them looked pretty ripped too.

What do we mean by ripped? We simply mean that their muscles are very prominent and noticeable. This is usually a sign that the muscles are used a great deal and extremely strong. It also means that the person does not have a lot of body fat to hide those strong lean muscles.

If you look at a person who is thin, but you don't see any real definition to their muscles, it usually means that they are probably not doing a lot of strength training. They may not really be doing any significant exercise at all.

Does it mean that they are not healthy? That is a difficult question to answer, but it is safe to say that someone without any real muscle definition is probably not as healthy as they could or should be.

So there's the first important thing - you can be skinny and unfit just as easily as you can be heavy and quite fit. Your muscles will only become very obvious when you are carrying minimal amounts of body fat.

Okay, so what does that mean to you? It means that you have to discover the balance you want. Do you want to be very bulky and muscular? Would you prefer a long, lean, and athletic look? Once you know this you have completed step one from that list provided in the Introduction - you have set goals for yourself.

## Building on Goals

Set goals, make them visible and execute! Sounds simple, right? Well let me tell you from experience that this is NOT simple. How many times have you observed someone generate significant excitement and apparent motivation to start a new weight loss initiative to only quit after a few weeks? Perhaps this may have even happened to you personally... multiple times. Been there myself. I am sure that you witness this around New Year's each year. From my perspective, like anything else in life, fitness success is achieved by knowing exactly what you want and developing a plan to accomplish your goals while staying focused with consistent implementation – tracking of your plan.

I believe that consistency is the key factor to success. Even with a 90-day program like [P90X](#), I often receive urgent emails from people that have been working the program for 1 week wondering why they don't have 6-pack abs yet! It takes time... took you more than 1 week to get out of shape, may just take you 90 days or more to get ripped. Besides, P90X is a 90-day program; otherwise it would have been called "P7X" for 1-week results. Results come from staying consistent with the workouts and nutrition for 90-days, or better yet, making a lifestyle change and commitment to your health. I have found that setting goals and posting them where visible day-to-day is critical to help you push through a challenging program. For me, this involves posting my goals and workout calendar at home AND work. What motivates me the most is the sense of accomplishment from crossing off a completed workout for the day or specific goal achieved. I know that doing this consistently over time will lead to ultimate success.

I recommend using the S.M.A.R.T. method for developing your goals. S.M.A.R.T. typically stands for SPECIFIC, MEASURABLE, ATTAINABLE, REALISTIC and TIMELY. I don't think further explanation is needed... it's simple. Set a deadline for specific accomplishments that can be measured.

Take a moment now to jot down the goals you have in mind. Do you want to drop 20 pounds and get some definition to the muscles? Or is your goal to gain muscle and really looked ripped? Whatever it is, just write it down:

My Fitness Goals: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Now that you know where you want to go, it is time to evaluate your current fitness level. Once you know that, you can start to explore your workout options. As I said, I found the amazing P90X, and have since added other exercise programs to my workout repertoire including Insanity and Body Beast. I have also leveraged modifications to enhance results. I call these Xtreme Hybrid Workouts that involve the use of cardiovascular intervals, dumbbells or resistance bands, weighted vest, weights on the ankles or wrists, and other accessories to boost results.

You also might want to take into consideration the need for stretching and range of motion work in order to help achieve those long and lean muscles. And, yes, that means Yoga. Its issues like this that can be a point of confusion for many people who are just getting started: They wonder if they should use the same system that I did, and they wonder if it is really something they will end up enjoying so much that it will stop feeling like "work".

And this is exactly the time when it is best to seek help from a knowledgeable professional. I myself was lucky enough to stumble on an infomercial about P90X and came to the conclusion that it might work for me given my level of fitness at the time. In addition, my growing knowledge of fitness and nutrition let me make safe choices. I knew what my body could endure and what was right for me at that time. This may not work for you, and for many, a visit to the doctor might be a smart choice. After that, it would be best to find a fitness expert for a bit of guidance.

So, once again, when first starting out, I suggest that you write down your goals and then find a qualified "coach" to help you discover what workout program might work best for you given your physical condition and your current level of ability. One of the worst things that can happen is that you go overboard at the start and make the workouts such a chore that you stop doing them. This happens quite often, and is a form of "burn out" that can be easily avoided. A coach is going to know what is right for you at the



moment and what goals you can reasonably set for yourself for the coming weeks, months, and even years.

You might also use something like the Team Beachbody website. This is chock full of information about the wellness lifestyle, and it has easy to understand details about fitness, nutrition and workout schedules.

Once you determine the workouts and routines you will use to get started, it is time to consider your diet. That is the subject of the next chapter, but before we move on to it I'd like to take some time to discuss muscle growth and how energy (calories and nutrients from food and supplements) can provide you with optimal results.

Why? As you start to learn about food, supplements, and working on your own workout and nutrition plan it is going to become important that you are familiar with the way that your choices will "work" or "not work" with your body. So, remember your goals, and use the following information to achieve them.

## How Muscles Grow

Muscle growth primarily comes from two things:

- Physical work; and
- Slow gains.

Yes, if you are going to build the body of your dreams you already know you have to work at it and then wait for it to happen because the natural process of muscle growth doesn't happen overnight.

In fact, the body is designed to increase muscle mass to a level that can deal with the "loads" most often placed upon it. In other words, if you lift the same weight for the same number of reps every day, your muscles will hit a plateau because you're no longer challenging them or asking more of them.

What might be helpful to know is that muscle growth occurs in two primary pathways. The first is known as hypertrophy, which is simply an overall increase in the size of the

muscle "fibers". The second is hyperplasia, which is a splitting of the muscle fibers that become the same size as the original fibers. Your muscles use both methods to grow.

When you do resistance exercises or lifting regimens you are obviously challenging a targeted group of muscles and joints. This actually leads to some "damage" that the body seeks to compensate by "rebuilding" in the anabolic state. This is going to occur in one of the two ways described above, and is a healthy and natural process.

What scientists know is that this is exactly how the body protects itself from such stress in the future, so if someone is a regular lifter or exerciser, their body will respond and grow muscle. The process of achieving your ultimate goals, however, doesn't happen in a few days' time.

Generally, the natural rate of rebuilding for day to day exercise is around 15 days, but when you are working out regularly you can see things "peak" within 36 to 72 hours. The big question here, however, is: "how do I get muscle development but remain lean?"

## Some Basic Answers

This is a great question because it requires us to learn a new word: metabolism. Metabolism is the process in the body by which the nutrients we consume are "destroyed" (meaning digested) and converted into energy. This process involves hormones, enzymes, and other bodily materials, and it is affected by age, gender, and lean body mass.

"Aha!" you might say "lean body mass!" To which I would respond, "Yes, the more muscle you carry the higher your metabolic rate."

"The what?" you say.

The metabolic rate is something everyone should know about because it is the rate at which your body burns up calories in order to maintain itself. Many of us know about the famous "BMR" or the basal metabolic rate, which is the total number of calories we need in order to maintain our current weight without any exercise.

Several predictive equations exist, but one method to calculate BMR uses the following formulas:

- Adult female:  $655 + (4.3 \times \text{weight in lbs.}) + (4.7 \times \text{height in inches}) - (4.7 \times \text{age in years})$ ; or
- Adult male:  $66 + (6.3 \times \text{body weight in lbs.}) + (12.9 \times \text{height in inches}) - (6.8 \times \text{age in years})$ .

The result is the number of calories someone your age, weight, and height would need just to *maintain* their current weight. The thing here is that this figure can vary substantially if you are a person with low body fat and high amounts of lean muscle. In fact, you might need much more energy (calories) simply to maintain your level of activity. Furthermore, as will be discussed, calorie requirements are also dependent on body type and individual wellness goals.

Which takes us back to the question: "How does the 'system' by which we build muscle work *with* our metabolism to help keep us lean? How can we use the impact of our resistance training, cardiovascular workouts, and ramped up metabolism to build muscle?"

We've already touched on most of the answers, though we will go over them in greater detail in later chapters, and they are:

- Strengthening exercises
- Cardiovascular work
- Eating properly (including the use of supplements and meal replacements)
- Proper rest

No matter what your fitness goals (ripped or lean and mean) you need to burn fat and build muscle. This can only come through a combination of targeted workouts and proper nutrition. So, now it is time to move on to the next chapter and the subject of your diet...

## Chapter Two

### Healthy Eating

I have a friend from high school who can eat whatever he wants and never gain weight. I am not jealous of him though, because he actually struggles to be more than just a very skinny guy. He is an "ectomorph"...and no, I am not calling him names. That is one of the three main body types or "somatypes" identified in the human race. The three types are:

- Ectomorph - a person who is small framed, very thin, and with narrow shoulders and hips is often labeled this body type. They cannot easily gain weight or build muscle and tend to need high amounts of carbohydrates if they want to bulk up. They're often called "hard gainers."
- Mesomorph - this is the "average" person who tends to be neither fat nor skinny, and who seems to be able to put on muscle easily, lose weight easily, and whose shoulders are only a bit wider than their hips.
- Endomorph - this is someone often called pear shaped because their hips are noticeably wider than their shoulders. They gain weight easily (some complain too easily) and have to heavily restrict carbohydrates to avoid weight gain.

I mention this because I use these models to help me determine the optimal diet for each person I coach. I find that many people are not absolute "types" and can show characteristics from one or more descriptions, but I use the dominant features to guide them to make nutrition choices that are aligned with their goals.

For example, I meet a guy who is clearly the same "type" as my high school buddy. He might be sinewy and have the beginnings of some definition, but he needs to put on weight. This is someone who I steer towards liquid protein shakes and clean nutrition with a higher carb diet. The protein is going to provide growth and hormone production, and will also help with cell repair. Remember that muscle grows after being damaged, and it is the rebuilding process that makes muscles increase in size and strength.

So obviously, it's important that you determine your body type in order to begin learning how to optimize your eating plan to achieve your goals.

## The Optimal Diet

Below are some good guidelines I provide in order to help people use their somatype to begin getting stronger and building muscle. Daily caloric intake is determined on a case-by-case basis using height, weight, age, activity level and ultimate goals.

- Someone who is an ectomorph has to figure out a way to eat calories that convert to muscle and not fat. Though they already have a hard time putting on weight they must still be pretty attentive to the foods and supplements that they eat if they want to enjoy the best results. The diet I typically suggest for them is:
  - 55% of their daily intake should be made up of carbohydrates
  - 20% of their daily intake should be made up of fat
  - 25% of their daily intake should be made up of protein.

This provides adequate energy while targeting muscle building rather than fat storage. I also tell anyone who is an ectomorph body type to eat more than just three times a day. Spreading out their intake keeps the calories flowing and prevents any overeating. I also may say "go for fluid" to prevent a feeling of being overly full as well. Yogurt smoothies, protein shakes, and even fresh fruit juices can really do the trick here.

- Someone who is a mesomorph will not have a lot of worries about their diet and can generally focus on ensuring that they get enough daily calories to compensate for their workouts. For them, the daily breakout may look like this:
  - 50% of their daily intake should be made up of carbohydrates
  - 20% of their daily intake should be made up of fat
  - 30% of their daily intake should be made up of protein.

This macronutrient distribution helps prevent fat storage and ensures that muscle mass is retained and developed. There are few food restrictions, but again, I would encourage them to spread things out throughout the day and to enjoy at least one liquid meal to prevent the feeling of being stuffed.

- The endomorph is the person who can gain weight easily, and will often struggle with fat loss. They can, however, usually build up their muscle fairly quickly. Therefore, I tell them that their optimal diet is one that is going to seek to achieve fat loss. For them, the day will look like this:
  - 45% (or less) of their daily intake should be made up of carbohydrates
  - 20% of their daily intake should be made up of fat
  - 35% of their daily intake should be made up of protein.

These are people who would do well to "eat a rainbow" on their plate. Fresh fruits, vegetables, and very lean proteins are the key here. I also recommend that endomorphic people pay attention to calorie intake and try to create a deficit each day if they are working to lose weight or fat. Spreading their meals out across four or five sittings a day is advisable for this somatype as well.

Remember, however, that no one is a "true" body type - not very often anyway. This means that the plans I give above should always be seen as suggestions. You might, for example, be a mesomorph who does long distance cycling and who needs a lot of carbs to make it through a ride.

What the somatypes do is tell us what our bodies tend to look like when we don't work out at all and when we don't put in the effort to get the body shape we desire. So, just work with what you have and who you are and try to integrate your body type with your fitness goals.

Clean nutrition is critical to achieve the ultimate wellness lifestyle regardless of somatype. It is important to pay attention to the type, quantity and timing of food and drinks. General nutrition tips include:

- Focus on a lot of vegetables such as broccoli, green beans, asparagus, celery, onions, mushrooms, green salad, avocado, zucchini, Brussels sprouts, yellow squash and spinach.
- Watch the sauces, sugars, dressing and creams – even for non-vegetable dishes. Unprocessed, healthy fat oils are typically the best.
- Some fruit is good. Examples include apples and pears.
- Lean meats are perfect. Turkey (white over dark if possible) and chicken are great choices. Removing the skin is ideal.
- Complex carbohydrates over starchy carbohydrates. For example, sweet potato (yams) over baked potato. Limit sour cream, cheese, butter, brown sugar and other additions to manipulate flavor. Watch the casseroles.
- Unsalted nuts are an excellent source of healthy fat such as raw almonds, walnuts, pecans and peanuts. (Great snack food!)
- Unsweetened teas and coffee without cream are recommended.
- Minimize dairy and breads (complex grain-type is best).
- For alcohol, which I do not recommend for optimal results, perhaps focus on red wine or some hard liquor with limited calorie or sugar impact. Remember, alcohol is 7 calories per gram relative to 4 calories per gram for carbs and protein. Fat is 9 calories per gram. Your body typically burns off alcohol before fat, which can thus enhance fat storage. For me and many others, beer is a poor choice (yes, even the low cal – carb options). However, my advice here is to drink one glass or bottle of water per drink regardless and enjoy yourself in moderation if you choose, especially if you work hard with your fitness program. Again, you do not want to create a lifestyle that you resent.
- Minimize desserts.

- Watch your salt intake. Excessive salt is unhealthy for many reasons, but you also retain more water as a consequence. I typically recommend 2400 mg per day.
- In general, taper carbs during the day with less in the evening.
- Do not overload your plate with food and take your time to eat. Trust me; you WILL consume less this way. Some people choose to take a smaller plate for portion control.
- Cooks – Be careful how much you “sample” your dishes since the calories may add up fast!

Additional nutrition tips for success will be discussed later.

I also recommend the use of the TeamBeachBody website's "Eat Smart" resources. This can provide you with access to a meal planner, recipes, and even some of their "Shakeology Recipes". [Shakeology](#) is a shake product that works as an amazing meal supplement or snack for people looking to bump up their metabolism, build muscle and enhance wellness.

The page is also full of handy tools for those who are working out and seeking to achieve optimal fitness. I really like that there are interactive forums available within their online community which can allow you to share your experiences, goals, issues, and successes with those facing similar challenges.

Having a way to speak with others about your experiences is an ideal opportunity, and it can often be your first steps in learning the value of "coaching". You can begin encouraging others, sharing what you know to help them achieve their goals, and learn that it is necessary to have support if you are to succeed. I found this as another invaluable part of my fitness journey. I also mentioned that meal substitutes can be a valuable tool for those seeking to eat an optimal diet while also doing daily workouts. The next section takes a look at some of the best resources.



## Meal Substitutes

I don't want to start listing the many brands of meal substitutes and supplements (though I do recommend Shakeology). What I would suggest is that you use the information in this guide to determine the key ingredients you need to work with your body type to help you achieve your goals.

*Are you in need of more protein to reduce fat storage?*

*Do you need high carbohydrate meals and supplements?*

You can use the links at my website [HowDolGetRipped.com](http://HowDolGetRipped.com) to find all of the appropriate nutrition and supplemental materials available. Each link explains the ingredients, benefits, and options for each product, and this is a good way to get started with plans to optimize your nutrition.

I also suggest supplements, but I want to give them a bit more attention. Which is why they are the focus of the next chapter.

## Chapter Three

### Supplements

No two people are alike, as we learned in the last chapter, and no one is going to have identical goals to anyone else. Because of this, you cannot just use a simple "one size fits all" supplement if you want to nurture your goals. Additionally, you have to accept that the things you are doing in your life may demand an entirely different assortment of supplements than if you were not doing them.

Before we get any deeper into the subject, however, let's be sure you understand what a supplement actually is.

The simplest definition is that it is something that is going to complete something else, or remedy a deficiency. So, if your latest blood work says that you are low in iron the doctor may suggest an iron supplement.

If you are on a weight management regimen it is not likely that you would benefit from a sports performance supplement. This means that the first thing you have to do when you start to consider the need for supplementation is to review your goals.

### Reviewing Goals

Remember those goals you wrote down in the first chapter? Revisit them now and try to sum them up in around three or four words. For instance:

"Base building"

"Muscle growth"

"Energy and faster recovery"

"Muscle strengthening"

"Weight loss"

"Performance and endurance"

"Bone strengthening"

"Joint health"

"Heart health"

Can you see any sort of pattern here? These are simple goals and they are also goals in which special supplemental formulations are easily found to facilitate results. Again, I would say a visit to my website would be a great place to begin. This is because you will be able to research and select the specific supplements designed to help you reach your own individual goals...

For example, you can find specially formulated vitamins that actually boost your immune system and help with energy and stamina. But any traditional fitness goals will have safe and effective supplements available, and I strongly suggest you use them at each step of the way after consulting with a professional to determine what makes the most sense for your lifestyle.

## Reaching Stages

How do you know if you actually need supplements? Most people who begin to do regular workouts and who modify their diet to help them meet their goals will eventually experience some sort of deficiency as their body adjusts.

For instance, the person who is transitioning to the endomorph diet is going to struggle a bit with energy management if they have always eaten a lot of carbohydrates. Because of this, we would say that an energy boosting supplement may be an ideal choice as they complete their transition. Will they have to use this forever? Probably not, but as I have emphasized, your fitness is not a destination...it is a journey. You need to understand where you are and take in the things you need to keep you moving forward.

As an example, Team Beachbody makes an "[Ultimate Reset](#)" package available. In that kit there are six supplements that are designed to help the body restore itself to optimal health. These supplements do everything from adjusting the alkalinity to detoxing and

oxygenating the body. This is a transitional set of supplements that the body will need as it rebalances itself, and it serves as a good example of the way that you should view supplementation as well.

I should point out that the creation of your optimal diet, the use of meal substitutes, and the choice of supplement plan are critical actions in which an experienced coach can be extremely handy. Because of this, I would like to move into our final chapter about you, your coach, and the idea of coaching becoming part of your goals.

## Chapter Four

### You and Your Coach

No matter how enthusiastic you have become about your workout and nutrition plans, you need a buddy. Most successful people say that it was the presence of a friend or life coach who got them through the biggest challenges. Even if you have online support from a wellness website, it is going to be just as invaluable to you as your workout gear, DVDs, shoes, and supplements.

Support, encouragement, and someone who "has your back" are all remarkably good motivating tools. Having access to expert knowledge about fitness and nutrition is a huge advantage too. You could easily dedicate many months of effort to the wrong workout and nutritional plans and end up at the same weight and with very little to show for it. Though this guide is an attempt to help readers avoid any sort of failure, it is impossible to learn everything from a book or website: it also takes the help of an experienced fitness enthusiast.

Remember that I am living proof of this. Growing up, I had always been a skinny guy and then as I got older, I experienced some depressing changes in my body, to be completely honest -- I was suddenly the pudgy guy who couldn't lose weight. I was fortunate enough to stumble on the P90X infomercial and to get involved with the Team Beachbody organization. I had my coach to guide me through my ups and downs and to tell me what I was doing right and where I was going wrong. It is in no small part because of coach guidance that I was able to achieve and even surpass my goals.

I cannot encourage you enough to work with a coach who makes your goals their own and who has the information, guidance, and answers you need to keep you on track. To truly succeed, you need to choose the right workout program, the ideal nutrition and supplement plans, and then get ongoing support and encouragement from someone who understands what you are going through.

This is the role of your coach, and they will become equal parts inspiration, mentor, and nagging voice that makes you keep going even when you are just too tired, cranky, or unwilling to continue.

They are the person who gives you the most essential keys to reaching your goals. For instance, consider the basics that I learned in just the first months of my new lifestyle...

## The Fitness Journey

My journey was actually fairly short because I started to get fit and then discovered what works for my body and lifestyle. What I learned, however, may be applicable to a broader audience. Here are some of my basic "coaches secrets" for you to use and share with others, and let me tell you that no matter what your personal goals, these tips and tactics are the preferred way to amp up the metabolism, eat optimally, and get lean muscle:

## Resistance/Weight Training

Fighting fat means burning it up through exercises that consume calories. Having muscle means that as you go through your day, you burn a lot more calories faster than you would without muscle. In fact, for every pound of lean muscle on your body you may easily consume an extra 50 calories each day, or 18k calories a year, even if you're just sitting on the couch! If, however, you are not hoping to compete with the Incredible Hulk in terms of mass, I would suggest you do the following:

1. Know these factors: weight loads, down time or rest periods between reps, intensity levels, order of exercises and the proper form of actual exercises are the key factors in the effectiveness of your workouts;
2. Limit rest: when doing sets it is best to avoid any prolonged rest periods for those looking to burn calories. Nothing more than 45 seconds should pass before you are doing the next set, because studies have shown that a 30 second rest period between sets may help you burn calories by upwards of 50% compared to getting a full rest of a few minutes or more;

3. Bump up the intensity: set the pace and do things in a "circuit". In other words, try to find ways to speed up the workout by inserting things between sets. Do 30 seconds of abdominal moves between sets of resistance, etc;
4. Multiples: you are going to burn more fat and build lean muscle when you do multiple movements in one routine or even one exercise, also known as compound discipline. For example, do presses and squats in the same workout to optimize the results;
5. Get ready to plateau: at week four to six of any new workout routine your body will likely have gotten used to the demands. You need to find ways to make changes such as incremental weight increases, fewer rest periods, using different weights, or anything that is going to get your body out of its predictable "rut" (switching to free weights is a great way to shake things up). This is the concept behind muscle confusion and the P90X program;
6. Cycle: don't go only for mass or burning. Instead, cycle through your workouts to get even and balanced results. Do strength work two days per week and your leaning out program three or four. Switch things up the next week, and keep the body cycling through changes and demands.

## Cardio

Balance is essential to your success. I would not have been able to achieve my goals if cardio hadn't become a regular part of the routine. In addition, when I first started out, I had no idea about the way that cardio could almost instantly amp up the fat loss by burning calories at such epic rates. This is how to do it right:

1. Follow up: if doing weight training, follow up with a blast of cardio. This ensures that all of the glycogen is gone and that the body grabs fat for energy to get through the routine.
2. Go empty: running on an empty stomach lets you tap into fat immediately. This is why people are told to get up in the morning and hit the treadmill or the road for a jog. Leverage a small snack if energy levels are low.

3. Taper it: instead of building up to speed you can get better results by doing the high rate cardio right away and then tapering off to a slow finish.
4. Mix it up: just like with weights, you need to mix up the cardio to prevent your body from acclimating.
5. Try intervals: going "all out" for an hour is not as effective as doing bursts of sprinting followed by recovery periods of jogging. This is the concept behind max intervals and the Insanity workout program.

## Nutrition

Though we looked at optimal eating plans and supplements, I want to share the following secrets that gave me a serious edge:

1. Water: one gallon per day is recommended for those who are working out and shedding fat.
2. Go citrus: grapefruit is a great and magical food. Those who consume half of a raw grapefruit prior to each meal will eat fewer calories and bump up their metabolism.
3. Know the GI: the glycemic index of a food tells you if it is a long slow burn (good) or an insulin spiker that allows you to crash and store fat (awful).
4. Fiber: we all know the story, but the more insoluble fiber that you eat the less body fat you store. Go for 35-40 grams per day from green veggies and even high fiber shakes.
5. Watch the clock: when you eat does matter. Don't eat late at night and try to get around 2/3 of your daily calories in before the dinner hour. Late night snack can be cottage cheese for a casein source of slow release protein to feed your muscles during the night.
6. Shop at the outside perimeter of grocery stores where clean nutrition can be found such as fruit, vegetables, grains, lean proteins and fresh seafood.



Processed foods, drinks and snacks are typically found in the inside aisles or lanes. Pay attention to food labels to make the best choices.

## Rest and Recovery Mechanisms

Rest allows you to recover. Rest is just as critical for getting ripped with your fitness program as the actual workouts that push you beyond your comfort zone. I personally believe that rest can be even more important. Rest and recovery are actually required for your muscles to grow. Rest IS when your muscles grow.

If one of your goals is to gain significant lean muscle mass, then one of my typical recommendations is to get even more rest in combination with a well-designed workout schedule, supplements and nutrition. Without adequate rest, your body and muscles will not have a chance to repair, recover and grow.

It is especially important to avoid overtraining. Overtraining may actually minimize all of your hard work and do more damage in the process of achieving your goals. Perhaps this is counter-intuitive? That is exactly why well-structured workout schedules have rest days and even stretch focus as critical components to the overall program. Get your rest!

Rest not only refers to the workout schedule but also the importance of getting sufficient sleep each night. There are numerous studies that demonstrate the impact of sleep on progress toward your wellness goals. Inadequate sleep may facilitate muscle catabolism (muscle tissue breakdown) versus anabolism (muscle tissue growth). There are studies that also indicate the negative impact of poor sleep on body fat reduction, hinting that a difference of even 30 minutes of extra sleep is significant.

Clearly, inadequate sleep may impact your workout performance and general energy levels during the course of the following day. I recommend at least 7 – 8 hours of sleep per night. Personally, I have noticed a big difference in my energy and performance when I started getting more sleep.

As discussed, rest is important and allows recovery. Recovery mechanisms can be enhanced with proper post-workout nutrition as well. That means muscle repair and

growth! I highly recommend post-workout supplements or meals to get the most out of your fitness initiatives. I have found enhanced results in addition to alleviating the symptoms of delayed onset muscle soreness (DOMS). Understanding the carb to protein balance is critical for shuttling protein and nutrients to your muscles when most susceptible immediately following your workout. Recovery in this manner, combined with rest, helps jump start the process of achievement toward your goals

## Road Warrior Discipline

I get a lot of questions with regards to recommendations for staying on track while on the road. It is a great question, actually. Road warriors must be disciplined. It is hard enough to maintain fitness and nutrition in a relatively controlled setting at home, however, travel for business or pleasure may result in significant loss of control over your program. Trust me.

Furthermore, loss of control for even a short period of time can have consequences on your progression toward identified fitness and wellness goals. Long days may impact your ability to workout or even get sufficient rest required for proper muscle repair and growth. Catered events or family visits may limit your nutrition options. Resistance to dessert or alcohol may be difficult. Nutrient timing may be compromised. Equipment resources may limit your fitness potential. These factors and many more may work against your personal transformation. Disruption of your routine for even one day can lead to a mindset that ultimately accepts failure.

Regardless of the numerous good excuses for not maintaining discipline on the road, I believe that you can make it work for you with motivation and preparation. For example, most of the Team Beachbody programs can be performed in hotel rooms typically even in small space. I usually get up early to complete my workouts before the uncertainty of the day begins. For travel you can bring resistance bands or water weights to provide a total body workout solution. Pull-ups for P90X are even possible using a door attachment for the resistance bands, or, I personally use the Power-Up Chin-up Handles from LifelineUSA. They are inexpensive, travel well and work awesome (no

cheating allowed in the movement)! Of course you can also leverage fitness rooms in your hotel or local gym if available.

From my perspective, the biggest issue on the road is nutrition. I usually focus on the basics and avoid dessert, breads and try to limit alcohol. Favorite meals include grilled chicken salad with oil dressing on the side, Subway grilled chicken or lean turkey sandwich (watch sodium with deli meat), grilled fish and complex carbohydrates such as sweet potato over baked.

I like the book, "EAT THIS, NOT THAT," for restaurant recommendations. Also, you can check menus online in advance if you know where you are eating or simply ask at the restaurant. Take your Shakeology nutrition as a snack or meal replacement. In addition, along with your daily vitamin schedule, healthy snacks such as protein bars travel well for the Road Warrior.

### Importance of Personal Development

Well, simply stated, I believe that personal development is critical for just about any aspect of life. Any, getting ripped or otherwise. This includes getting the most out of your abilities to achieve success by enhancing your physical and mental awareness – toughness.

For example, pushing yourself beyond what you THOUGHT were your physical limits to complete many of the intense Insanity or P90X workouts! Understanding your opportunities for improvement also requires leveraging positive attitude with motivation to challenge yourself and stretch outside your comfort zone (where significant, and in my opinion most, learning occurs). Taking failure in stride and learning from experiences to advance your growth potential is fundamental.

With that said, I attribute much of my current and developing success in my workouts and career to renewed focus on personal development. Of course this can translate to your personal life, perhaps most importantly.

So, how do I focus on personal development? Well, many ways, but mostly looking for experiences or training approaches that expand my comfort zone, whether resulting in success, failure or a combination thereof.

Training involves not only my day-to-day workouts, but also educational seminars, advanced degree opportunities and / or general development literature available to challenge my perspective. Although I have an advanced degree, I am the first to admit I still have a lot to learn, and, thus, embrace reading personal development books, for example. ...

One of my favorite books is "The Slight Edge" by Jeff Olson. I embrace the concept of "compounding" effort, whether focused on increasing the value of your retirement account or achieving progress toward your fitness or career development goals. I ascribe to the theory of doing the small things every day, which appear rather insignificant, and are easy to do - easy not to do. It is the small things accomplished over time that will lead to great success if consistently executed.

It is the Slight Edge that I am executing in both my physical and professional initiatives with success. This has driven the evolution of my development and is key to my simultaneous success as both a R&D manager AND Team Beachbody Coach.

From a workout perspective, graduating programs such as P90X and Insanity has stretched my imagination in terms of physical capabilities and going beyond my comfort zone. I have achieved confidence from these programs. Graduation helped expand my mental toughness allowing me to achieve some significant physical challenges while on a REI adventure trip to Alaska including hiking a glacier, mountain biking and whitewater rafting difficult obstacles. I encourage each and every one of you to figure out how to get outside YOUR comfort zone and grow physically, mentally and financially.

In summary of my "coaches secrets", I agree: some of it may be pretty basic information, but it is what works for those who use it. I myself muttered a few silent "No,

duhs" when my coach reminded me of a few of them, but then I realized that I wasn't practicing what they were preaching. Once I did, I started to see radical and rapid results.

What results do you want? Again, it all depends on your goals. I can tell you that sticking with the plans provided here may get you results pretty quickly. So quickly, in fact, that you might want to copy me and start telling the world all about it. This means, my friend, that you have become a perfect candidate for coaching.

## Become a Coach

Today we have "coaches" or "mentors". They are fairly similar with both seeking to help others to identify and reach their goals. As a fitness coach I work with clients to really figure out what they want, why they want it, and how to get them there. It is never a rapid program or instant fix. Instead, I look at their lifestyle and habits, their choices in diet and exercise, and discover ways of helping them to improve their health and well being. Yes, most of my clients are interested in getting ripped and in tip top condition, but they also get remarkably healthy along the way. The financial incentive with coaching is just a bonus for such a rewarding career that helps others achieve their ultimate wellness goals, whether on a part-time or full-time basis.

If you are interested in coaching, I have some suggested options below:

### The Top Programs

1. [How Do I Get Ripped](#) - this is my program and I am always seeking motivated people who want to become serious business partners while also helping people to get into the best condition of their life. Coaching lets people share their passion for fitness and nutrition, and which also helps them to obtain financial freedom through their efforts too.
2. Personal Trainer Certification or Nutrition expertise from leading organizations.

## In Conclusion

There are no easy answers or solutions where wellness and fitness are concerned...there are only the answers that apply best to each person. I discovered this for myself when I began using the Team Beachbody solutions. I now know what works for me, and how to steer others towards the best answers for their needs too.

I wish you the best of luck in figuring out your goals and how to reach them. I hope you use this guide to make the best choices and to find the best products that will help you along the way. I cannot emphasize enough the benefit of finding a coach or a community of fellow wellness enthusiasts.

You may discover that you have been bitten by the fitness bug just like me, in which case I strongly encourage you to consider coaching in order to share your success and all that you have learned. Your life is a journey and I hope that this guide provides you with a road map to a healthier future.

## About

Mike Nowak is a Star Diamond Independent Team Beachbody Coach, CEO and Founder of **TEAM RAGE** and [www.HowDoIGetRipped.com](http://www.HowDoIGetRipped.com). For more information on how to join his strong and growing Team including daily motivation and support please contact Mike at [coachragebeachbody@gmail.com](mailto:coachragebeachbody@gmail.com).

