

# The TOPS Reminder

A newsletter for Western Massachusetts Counties

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## How a Busy Mom Got Motivated to Go to the Gym (If She Can, So Can You!)

Here are one busy Mom's "secrets" for making the gym a non-negotiable part of her life

By Ronnie Koenig - February 7, 2014



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“Should I go to the gym? I really should go to the gym. It’s been x number of days/weeks since I’ve gone.”

If you’ve ever had this conversation with yourself, you’re not alone. I used to spend many mornings staring at the pile of gym clothes on my dresser that I’d so impressively laid out the night before, coming up with reasons NOT to put them on and just GO. The truth is, whether its work, the kids or simply that time of the month when you morph into an evil, bloated witch, if you are looking for reasons not to exercise, you will definitely find them. I used to be extremely creative in my excuse-making, but now I’m one of those annoying “gym people” who not only look forward to working out most days but actually

feel shaky on the days I don’t get my cardio fix.

Before you roll your eyes or click off this page — just give me a sec. I didn’t turn into some lobotomized, Lulu lemon-wearing hamster on a wheel. And I’m not working out in my home gym in Malibu — most mornings I’m pushing a stroller in the freezing cold to the local YMCA. Okay, it may be in a cute neighborhood of Brooklyn, but this is a place where retirees walk briskly on the treadmill in dungarees and loafers and it’s not uncommon to see someone using a CVS bag to tote their belongings. Although I may aspire to look like Data Von Tease, I’m not going here for the glamour.

We all know the benefits of regular exercise — that it helps with weight loss, reduces the risk of scary diseases, improves sleep, sex and mood (even on those evil witch days). But sometimes, we just need that extra push. Here are my “secrets” for making the gym a non-negotiable part of my life. Maybe one or two will resonate with you!

## Same time, every day

I go to the gym in the morning and that works for me because it means that other “emergencies” won’t keep me from going later in the day. I also don’t like the prospect of showering and doing my hair/makeup twice, so going in the AM suits me best. But the key is finding a time that works for you — and sticking to it.

## Wear real workout clothes

If I had to put on ugly grey sweats and an old t-shirt received as a free give-away with a credit card application, you can bet I’d avoid going. Real workout clothing means something you feel at least semi-cute in, preferably made of moisture-wicking material so you’re not sitting in a pool of your own sweat after five minutes.

## Look at it like a break

When you’re working out, it’s your time to focus on yourself and feeling good. No answering calls or emails. My gym has a room where my kids can spend time playing so for me it’s a much-needed break from my mommy duties (though I do get interrupted every once in a while to change a doody diaper).

## Give yourself little rewards

For a while I would allow myself to download a new song for every workout I completed. Then I’d be motivated to exercise to my new song the next day. Lately I look forward to my post-workout snack — an approximately 200-calorie one recommended by my nutritionist [Frances Largeman-Roth](#). A smoothie (shared with my son) ranks among my favorites (and that’s fruit and ice with a little soy milk, people, not something with the words Oreo or anything “-chino” in the name).

## Let go of inhibitions

When personal trainer Joanna Paterson of [Bodysynergy](#) created a workout program for me, I was mortified by the prospect of doing big, dynamic, look-at-me movements like jumping jacks and squats in front of others. Sure, life was a lot safer marking time on the elliptical for 30 minutes, but I wasn’t getting results. What I realized once I started doing my little Jane Fonda routine on the mats is that Joanna was right — initially people did look at me, but then they just as quickly went back to their TV monitors and iPhones. I may be a spaz jumping around the middle of the room, but I feel great.

## Find a motivator

Even though my goals motivate me to get to the gym every day (noble ones, like being healthier for my kids, and shallow ones, like looking hot in skinny jeans), sometimes all it takes is another person to help you get past the place where your mind is telling you “no.” Joanna pointed out that I work out a lot harder when she is standing over me (but that might

be because I am also slightly scared of her, and I mean that in the most complimentary way).

## Bask in the results

The biggest thing that keeps me getting my money's worth of my gym membership is that once I saw results, it motivated me to keep going. Those results don't have to be pounds on a scale, either. Looking at a picture of myself from a friend's recent wedding in a sleeveless dress makes me want to go lift those 5-lbs weights. A little healthy motivation is a beautiful thing.

## EXERCISE IN TOPS

Just because it is winter, that is no excuse no to do some type of exercise? Please get your Drs' permission before you do any shoveling.

1. Do a Leslie Samson walking video, don't worry if you can't keep up with her, have fun.
2. If walking isn't your thing there is dancing with Richard Simmons, there is a chair exercising video. TOPS also has an easier
3. There's mixed feeling weather to exercise alone or with a friend. While exercising with a friend can be fun you start to depend on that person to get to exercise at the gym or go for a walk when they stop the chance you will find it difficult to exercise is high.
4. Another great exercise is to walk back and

forth down the halls in your apartment.

5. When watching TV, decide what you want to do walk in place, squats etc during the commercials. Just move.

### Q: Can you gain weight from diet soda?

— Eve, Texas



A:

Some researchers believe that diet soda whets the appetite for sweeter foods, and when they drink it, people therefore end up eating more sweets. The idea that [diet soda](#) causes weight gain has not been fully proven. Studies do show that those who consume diet sodas don't gain as much weight as those who consume regular, sugar-sweetened sodas.

I am not convinced that diet soda causes weight gain, and I do recommend it if someone insists on [drinking soda](#). Of course, the best fluid is water because the body needs it and it has no calories. Try sparkling or flavored waters, water with lemon, unsweetened iced teas, and iced coffees without cream or sugar. Tea and coffee can be dehydrating, however, and if you add sugar and milk, they will add calories to your diet. Also remember

that juices have calories — sometimes as many as sugar-sweetened sodas.

There is a hypothesis that drinking your calories can cause weight gain because the brain doesn't register the calories as well as it does solid calories, and so you end up eating more before you feel full. This view is associated with better scientific data than the hypothesis that diet soda whets your appetite for sweets and somehow makes you eat more sugar in the long run.

Learn more in the [Everyday Health Weight Center](#).

### Cynthia Mack, Retreat Director

She used to tell us that the only liquid that counted towards your 8 glasses of water was any liquid that you would be willing to wash your cashmere sweater . Think about it I wouldn't use soda or tea so why wash your insides with it.

### Why not try A contest Between another Chapter

Last year 0344 Southwick and 0211 Chicopee decided to have a contest. Last year it was around best average weight loss. MA 0211 Chicopee lost by under a pound. This summer both chapters are getting together to have a barbecue our chapter will pay for the meat.

(members) and 0344 Southwick will help with salads. Judy said the contest motivated her and she lost 17 pounds, Mike also did well. He lost around 15 pounds (leader and weight recorder of 0344 Southwick). Amy Garron of 0211 never had a gain and lost over 30 pounds great job. This year we are going to play Baseball. As an Area Captain it doesn't matter who wins. I want the chapters to get motivated: a little competition doesn't hurt anyone. This year we are trying to win \$20 and a Certificate. The winning chapter can purchase charms or award the top losers the chose is theirs. GOOD Luck Teams! We Can Do IT!! The chapters will also meet other TOPS member 0344 doesn't attend TOPS functions and 0211 members attend Fall Rally but very few go to SRD.

### **KOPS HONOR SOCIETY**

Ever since I became an Area Captain it has been my goal to start an Honor Society for the KOPS in my area. You all worked to join the KOPS circle and I feel you deserve to have 4 meetings a year just for you. My co-leader Amy who is a KOPS is going with me to visit the KOPS honor Society that Barbara DeVita

belongs to in Wilmington. I would like to have a meeting in each area Hamden, Hampshire, Franklin and Berkshire counties. I would just have to have somebody in each area find a place. More information after the 13<sup>th</sup> of March.

### **Looking For Your Help**

As an Area Captain it is my responsibility to visit and do my AC program. Some chapters invite me back for officers and award night/day. I usually visit my chapters with 2 programs and award ceremonies.

I'm also here to support the leaders with problems with their chapters. If anyone else has concerns they can call me. Not everyone gets along with each other it's a fact of life. We are together 1 ½ hours a week let's remember the TOPS mission is to support members as they lose and keep off weight sensibly. Please be supportive at the meeting it's hard to lose weight when you don't want to go to your own chapter. We are all here for the same thing, let's start new for 2014. I'm here for you I've been asked about chapter funds by a few members.

To clear it up....

If your chapter disbands the chapter closes their bank account and a check is written

out to Rosie. As your area Captain I will meet with you to pick up check and anything purchased with TOPS funds, example the digital scale, charms, books. We also take back programs etc. If 5 members leave and go to another chapter they DO NOT receive any funds. If they left and started a chapter of their own they would receive a percentage of the funds.

### **CLEARING UP SPENDING OF TOPS FUNDS**

Each chapter needs to have bylaws and a copy needs to be sent to Rosie.

Our chapter reviews our bylaws at election time but anytime during the year you can add an addendum. All voting should be private this way people won't be intimidated. You can vote on anything unless it goes against the international rules. I have one chapter that sends a Memory Lamp when a member of the family passes away. Another chapter sends flowers if they are sick in the hospital from chapter funds if they have the same illness they collect from members and chapter matches. At one time TOPS didn't want us to donate to other non-profit agency in the name of our TOPS group but looking

through the TOPS News, I believe it changed.

## **Looking for Halls**

This year I would like to Have 2 inspiration workshops:

Officers workshop

A night of sharing

A walk in the Spring and Fall

Who is able to help? Does your church have a hall? Do you have a safe route to walk?

Please don't compare yourself to other workshops. There is no need to cook unless you want to use it as a fundraiser. I could always take orders for Subway. I might have a hall but it's in Holyoke down the street from my house, very safe I would need volunteers and we would have a nice place to walk.

## **YES YOU CAN EAT TOO LITTLE**

You're all trying not to go over your allotted calorie amounts for the week, but how many of you are having trouble eating *enough* calories? It may not seem like a big deal to consume a hundred or so fewer calories than you're supposed to each day, but that's a

dangerous — and incorrect — assumption.



It is absolutely 100 percent essential to eat enough calories! If you don't, it will destroy your metabolism. It's like telling your body that you're starving. If your body thinks it's starving, your metabolism will shut down.

Not eating enough calories will also force the body to cannibalize muscle and hold on to fat. The body considers muscle to be expendable during periods of starvation, and it considers fat to be necessary to insulate your organs for survival.

Finally, a deficit of daily calories will lead to a horrible cycle of yo-yo dieting. You'll starve yourself and end up losing muscle, and when you begin to eat the right amount of calories, your body will pack on the pounds in anticipation of another "famine."

What can you do to break the cycle? If you're a woman, set your calories at 1,400 steady — don't vary them. I almost NEVER say that, but in order to get your metabolism back up to speed and set your body right again, you're going to need consistency and time.

Stay on this calorie allowance and exercise at least five hours a week. You probably won't lose weight for at least four weeks, but the good news is that you won't gain either, and hopefully we will have gotten your metabolism back on track permanently. After about four weeks or so, you should start to lose weight, and then you can begin to vary your daily calorie intake — as long as you never drop below 1,200 calories. Now, go get something to eat!

## **KOPS HONOR SOCIETY**

Since I've become an Area Captain I wanted to do something special for the KOPS by starting an Honor Society for you. Two weeks ago Amy my co-leader and KOPS & I went to the Rainbow Honor Society in Wilmington to see what it entails. Talking to the members of the group, they look forward to KOPS meetings. Because my area is so large I was thinking we could have a meeting in each area so there wouldn't be one area always holding the meeting and the rest traveling a long distance. Let's get this going you are worth it.

You've never identified yourself as "skinny." Don't be afraid of what you'll be like when you're thinner. Feel the fear and do it anyway! And don't sabotage your efforts because you don't deem yourself

worthy — you are SO deserving of achieving your weight-loss goal! Let's dig deep, get our hands dirty, and do this. What is there to be afraid of when you're healthy — besides living the life you're supposed to lead? When you're overweight and uncomfortable, there is so much less you *can* do, and you always live with the threat of having a stroke, developing type 2 diabetes, or getting cancer. Obviously, a lot more risks are involved if you give up and stay stuck instead of making changes.

The only thing that's holding you back from achieving your dreams is YOU. Believe in yourself, and stop letting your excuses keep you from living. Screw surviving — it's time to thrive!

## **UPDATE ON JILL**

Update on Jill: Went to see her today. She is doing very well! They were taking her to therapy this afternoon. She is really tired but doing so good! She was sitting up in bed trying to eat her lunch. I didn't stay too long because I know she needs her rest. Keep praying the prayers are sure working. Judy Iwirn and Ann Clark have been keeping me up on how she is doing. Please send her a card if you haven't

## **5 Signs You'll Reach Your Weight Loss Goal**

By +Diane Petrella on Mar 06, 2014 09:00 AM in Dieting & You

If you monitor your weight loss progress, you probably look to your bathroom scale for feedback. Or perhaps you gauge pounds lost by how your clothes feel. While these visible indicators show you're releasing weight, they don't reveal the whole story.

As any yo-yo dieter knows, these progress markers can come and go. Some other signs of success, however, aren't so obvious, but once you achieve them they're with you forever.

A missing element in many weight loss approaches is developing your inner strength. You'll reach your weight loss goal more easily when you erase negativity and doubt from your mind. Here are five signs that prove you've done so.



### **1. You Have Patience**

Many people feel discouraged when they hit a plateau or the pounds don't come off fast enough. They then give up too quickly. Permanent weight loss takes time. When you feel defeated re-evaluate your nutrition and exercise plan, and have patience. The longer it takes to release weight, the more time you have to change old ways of thinking that contributed to gaining weight in the first place. Patience helps you do that. You not only lose weight responsibly, you become a more confident person in the process.

### **2. You Persevere Through Set-backs**

As you develop new lifestyle habits, you may falter sometimes. We all do. It doesn't matter that you slip; what matters is what you do about it. Use set-backs as a valuable opportunity to strengthen your strong side. For example, if you missed exercising for several weeks, tell yourself with no judgment, "Tomorrow is a new day to keep moving forward." Each time you persevere, you develop confidence. You weaken that taunting inner voice that says, "See, you can't do this." Perseverance responds, "Yes, I can".

### **3. You Accept Your Body**

Accepting your body doesn't mean you tolerate being overweight. It means you honor your body as it is, while helping it become the best it can be. If it's a big leap right now to "love" or even "like" your body, that's OK. What's important is to respect it. That means speaking to your

body with kind words. It means giving it nutritious foods and movement so it thrives. You'll reach your weight loss goals when you stop rebelling against your body. As you accept your body as the treasured gift it is, taking good care of it becomes your only option.

### **4. You Focus on Your Goal**

Focus on where you're headed instead of obsessing about where you are. You can't move forward if your mind dwells on self-critical thoughts about being overweight. What we focus our attention on grows. Shift negative attention away from your current weight and concentrate on the positive lifestyle changes you're making. This inspires you to succeed. When your desire to look forward overshadows the tendency to complain about where you are, you'll reach your goal more easily.

### **5. You Make Yourself a Priority**

To achieve weight loss success, your well-being must be of prime importance. This means setting boundaries. For example, if you plan to exercise after work and your friend asks to go shopping, what do you do? Do you skip exercise or do you skip shopping? If breaking promises to yourself becomes a pattern, you're either not committed to your goals or you make other people's needs more important than your own. When you make yourself a priority, however, you'll not only reach your weight loss goal, your success will last forever.

## **Remember**

**With baby steps you can climb any mountain to your goal!**



## **Terri**