



## 21 day SO FIT challenge!

Out of routine from school holidays? Too many summer BBQs and garden parties? Or just lost your way a bit from over the last 18 months.....

Well, here is a challenge that will get you back on track and incorporate some healthy choices again, and pick up some easy quick wins to improve your wellbeing.

We will cover '4 pillars' of health and wellbeing

- Daily habits
- Nutrition
- Mental health and Wellness
- Exercise

The tasks and methods I have set out can be easily achieved and designed to be maintained after this challenge is completed. Without drastic diet fads, spending hours exercising or restricting yourself drastically.

Lets dive in...

Often people will go on an exercise health plan or journey, This is what often happens...  
People complete this Challenge

And as expected, it has a positive effect on their physical, mental and emotional health and energy levels.

They also lose a load of weight.

They feel fantastic.

But then - they make a fatal mistake.

They stop doing all of the things they've been doing that have brought about this new found energy and vibrancy.

They revert back to their old behaviours and routines.

As soon as they do...

The weight goes back on, they lose the feel-good factor and energy they have found.

New habits = new positive outcomes

Old habits = old unhappy outcomes

## **Pillar 1 – daily habits**

These are THREE easy quick wins that almost everyone can do to improve their physical and mental health. Not only is it practically free to do so as well, it will likely save you money too!

### **Hydration**

Drink 3 ltrs of water a day.

Dead simple. If you drink 3l of water per day you get to tick your box. Your brain is approx. 75% water – the more hydrated it is, the better it functions.

Dehydration causes feelings of exhaustion, exactly the same as if you'd had a poor night's sleep. In turn, this makes you crave sugary and starchy foods and makes you far less likely to do any exercise. It also facilitates fat loss.

### **Sleep**

7-9 hours sleep. A must.

There is a close correlation between the amount and quality of sleep you get and your physical health, your mood, energy levels and general wellbeing.

Tests have shown that a human being functions to its highest level on 7-9 hours sleep. So – stop staying up late watching crap on the TV.

Start going to bed and getting up at the same time every day. Get your body in a routine to ensure you get maximum sleep. You will find you fall asleep almost immediately after a week of doing so too.

If you are a poor sleeper, we have methods to help which we will cover. Try and stay in bed, you are still resting. Don't be tempted to watch tv or get up for a coffee. Limit your caffeine intake through the day, no coffee or tea after 1300. It all effects your sleep even if you think bed time is hours away.

### **Reduce/limit alcohol**

As much as I do enjoy an alcoholic drink, I class it as the devil. It will have a massive effect on your blood sugars, switching on cravings for sugary/carb rich foods. It can lower your mood, affect concentration and ruins your sleep. Seriously consider cutting back, and what sort of drink you have. Beer, cider, ales will cause inflammation, weight gain, bloating and poor gut health. Wine and spirits are moderately better. Red wine has been known to have some health benefits.

**ALCHOL WILL DESTROY ANY ROUTINE OR PROGRESS YOU HAVE MADE.**

Now when it comes to creating new habits, it is sometimes best to concentrate on one or two things and get them imbedded into your daily life.

These Three easy additions must be achieved throughout this challenge. There is no option or no excuses here.



The rest of the programme, I have given you options of methods to take on, not to overwhelm you. However, you feel you can take on more than one do so. Or, repeat the challenge again adding another challenge.

## **Pillar 2 - Exercise**

Love it or hate it, it is one of the most beneficial things you can do to live longer. It helps control weight gain; it makes you feel emotionally and mentally better by releasing endorphins into your body. This is commonly known as the love hormone as it makes you feel kind, happy, energised and that feeling you first get when you are first In love. Also, the connection with a better mental health is scientifically proven.

Be active EVERYDAY. Now, I don't expect you to attend every SO FIT bootcamp class, or run 5 miles every day. What I want you to do is raise your heart rate for 30 minutes. Commit to 2-3 classes a week, outdoors OR online = this counts too. The days in-between then still do something, walk, run, swim.

If you are new to exercise or not done any for a while this can be a brisk walk or a long Sunday stroll. Try to push yourself, longer, or faster every couple of times. Add weight to a rucksack when out walking with the kids. Will make things a little more challenging.

If you want to know more on how to start exercising then get in touch. Use our YouTube channel for home recorded workouts. All levels catered for.

## **Pillar 3 nutrition**

What if I told you that almost everything you have been told by the 'experts' and government authorities regarding nutrition is wrong?

You would say I'm mad!...possibly. What if I told you fat is good for you and it will actually help you lose weight...?

**We have got to look at food as medicine**, it's no longer a case of 'calories in V calories out' The food we consume helps support our immune system, fights cancer cells, improves our cognitive function and mood. The food industry is conning you and making you addicted to sugar and refined processed carbs.

I am giving you three options here to implement. I understand being a father of young children, husband, business owner that nutrition is the hardest element of a healthy lifestyle to consistency maintain. This is why I have over the last few years studied and adopted a simple and most effective nutrition option. NO calorie counting, NO majorly restrictive diets, NO silly shakes or fad pills.

## **Intermittent fasting**

It's very simple. The human body isn't designed to continuously consume food.

If you think about it, most people start eating food not long after they get up in the morning and continue until late at night, often right up until bed time. This means that most people have an 'eating window' of around 12-16 hours per day, which is too long for optimal health and wellness.



A 12-16 hour eating window can have all kinds of negative effects on:

The metabolism and weight control.

Blood sugar levels.

Gut health.

Mental and emotional health.

Energy levels.

Mental clarity and cognitive function.

The digestive system.

So.

If we can just reduce our eating window (not necessarily the amount we eat), we can begin to reverse all of the adverse effects that continuous eating has on our health.

This is obviously where the Intermittent Fasting comes in. If we can increase our fasting time and therefore reduce our daily eating window, we can:

Boost our metabolism and control our weight.

Regulate our blood sugar levels,

Improve our gut health.

Positively impact our mental and emotional health.

Increase our energy levels.

Enhance our mental clarity and cognitive function.

Give our digestive system a much needed rest.

Autophagy is the process the body uses to clear out dead or dying cells and replace them with new ones. There are all kinds of health benefits to this, including:

Anti-ageing effects.

The metabolization of fat.

A reduction in the risk of Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease.

Increased production of natural growth hormones, leading to increased lean muscle mass (stronger muscles - important as we get older).

Some more recent studies are also beginning to suggest that autophagy can have a positive effect on the prevention and treatment of cancer.

The best way to stimulate autophagy in the body is with regular exercise and fasting.

**IMPORTANT SAFETY NOTICE - before deciding to experiment with Intermittent Fasting, consult with your doctor if you're taking any medication, are pregnant, breastfeeding or wishing to become pregnant, or have a chronic condition such as heart disease or**



diabetes.

**IMPORTANT SAFETY NOTICE** - If at any point you feel dizzy or faint whilst exercising when Intermittent Fasting, stop immediately and sit down.

It is important too, not to get sucked in or convince yourself that just because you are having one less meal doesn't mean you can binge eat for the others! Still important to eat healthy.

**For more information and how to approach intermittent fasting please read the document 'intermittent fasting guide' in the files on the SO FIT support group or message us to get PDF**

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/283444295652809>

### **Pagan/caveman lifestyle (low carb high healthy fat)**

I was a firm believer in the traditional teachings that:

*'Fat is bad, wholegrains are good, and that the best thing you can do is eat a low fat diet, consume a sensible amount of calories and do some exercise - and as long as you did that you'd be fine!'*

Why change it if working right? Well, I am a firm believer of there is always room for improvement and I was not happy with my mental state or the change in my appearance. As a mental health practitioner, I was fascinated how what foods could potentially alter and improve your mindset, thought process and mental health.

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With this style of nutrition,

Remember – NO sugars, bread, pasta, white rice, white potato, cereals or grains. No more cows milk than a splash in 2-3 tea/coffees per day.

You DO eat – Plenty of leafy green vegetables, small amounts of meat, fish or egg, small portions of nuts/seeds, fruit (no more than 1-3 pieces of fruit per day).



## **What is the science behind it?**

Well. To put it in layman's terms. This is what happens...

When you eat sugars or refined carbohydrates, you spike your blood sugar levels.

When that happens, your body releases insulin into your blood stream to deal with the excess sugar and try to regulate it.

When insulin is released into your blood stream, fat cells within the body 'open up' and 'absorb' all the sugar out of the blood and store it as fat (obviously meaning you also put on weight). You then have a blood sugar 'crash'. Your blood levels are then too low

A blood sugar crash makes you feel sleepy and lethargic and you start craving more sugary foods or refined carbohydrates to take you out of this crash – and the cycle starts all over again!

All of this plays havoc with your cognitive function, your mood and begins to affect your mental health.

It's why so many people feel 'fine' but not 'great'.

It's why so many people struggle to lose weight or keep the weight off.

And it's a major contributor to chronic illness and mental health issues being at record levels.

In summary...

Sugars and refined carbohydrates DO spike your blood sugar levels.

Fat, fibre and proteins, the foods you eat when following a Pegan lifestyle, DO NOT spike your blood sugar levels.

Try it for 21 days, and I bet you will notice a massive difference in your mood, wellbeing and waist line. In fact, I am that sure you will feel better after 7 days!

Note: As part of a Pegan lifestyle you are permitted ONE small glass of red wine per day and a couple of squares of DARK chocolate per day. But anything more than that - no tick!

**Please read the Pegan/80/20 lifestyle document on the group for more information or message for the PDF**

**There are also meal and recipes, and a shopping list to help you adapt to this.**

### **More veg more Fat**

Even if you can replace refined carbs and processed foods from your diet you will see a marked improvement in your skin, appearance, energy, long term health, the list goes on.

Do you really need to have pasta with your Bolognese? Replace it with veg, better for you and you will be more satisfied for longer.

Your body and brain are designed to run on healthy fats. Such as avocado, olive oil, nuts, etc. NOT sugar or carbs. So, when you consume your sugary cereal, or toast you will find you are hungry a few hours later. Try having healthy fats instead and your brain will work much better.

Also, eating healthy saturated fat does not give you heart disease!

For more information check out the 'food in detail' document on the group or message which will explain what food does what to your body and mind. Quick hacks to get goodness and super foods into your diet.

**If you implement all of these methods your quality of life will change exponentially.**



If you feel all of this might be difficult, pick ONE and see it through for 21 days. I guarantee you will feel better in yourself and also lose fat. If you can add the others in sporadically it will help too. DON'T binge on carbs and then increase your healthy fat intake though. It will be counterproductive.

**There is also a recipe book in 'files' on our group or email for a PDF to help you with these methods.**

#### **Pillar 4 – wellness and mental health**

I always thought your mental health and wellbeing was linked to exercising like a mad man, getting smashed on the weekend and feeling good about yourself for a few hours in the process.

The last few years I have researched and experimented different holistic approaches that are as simple as lighting a candle to more extreme cold-water exposure. I have narrowed 3 practical methods that can be easily implemented as part of your 'daily routine' that doesn't take too long, and again completely free!

Have you ever thought to yourself om 'OK' but don't feel 'fantastic' Or you feel little scenarios tend to make you 'flip your lid' or tip you over the edge, you lose your temper or snap?

#### **Breathing practice**

I always though this is all a bit 'hippy' and radical. But breath work will be a game changer in sport, mental health, and physical health very soon. It is a powerful practice. It is one of the biggest and most effective additions I have made to my daily 'habits' to improve my wellbeing. It can be done in 5-10 minutes, there really is no excuse not to do it.

It can reduce blood pressure and have positive physical effects on your body too.

The biggest benefit I have had though is dealing with the days to day pressures. Having a calm and relaxed connection to others around me. It can also give feelings of openness, love, peace, gratitude, clarity, communication, and connection.

Who doesn't want that!

There will be guided videos on how to do this.

A simple stress reliver is this basic pattern. Find a quiet place where there is no distractions or noise, sit comfortably or lay down.

Breath in for 6 seconds through the nose, pause for 4 seconds, and breath out again throught the nose for 8 seconds.

Wait till you body naturally wants to start the next breath (do not force it) and repeat for 12 times.

Do in to a normal breathing pattern for 10-20 seconds and complete another round.

It's that simple!

#### **Cold water therapy**

This is not for everyone but has become very trendy lately.



Exposing yourself to cold water/shock can have amazing affects to your mental and emotional health.

1. It boosts your immune system; over time it will increase your white blood cells helping defend against nasties.
2. Gives you a natural high! The endorphins released during and after are plentiful.
3. Reduces stress. It opens up your window of tolerance to deal with more stressful situations. Make you become more resilient and actually makes you feel alive!

I will explain more in a video the best way to approach trying this.

### **Social Media/news detox**

Let's face it, it is a big part of our life now like it or lump it. However, social media platforms will make you addicted to being on their app. It is to drive engagement, advertising and as always comes down to MONEY.

Try one of these two things.

Turn off notifications on your social media apps. Stop the little red circle and number appearing. This makes you want to open and start scrolling. Instead give yourself 3-4 slots a day t 'check' your social media. Over time, you will find that your day and you survive just fine without constantly being on a negative news feed or bombarded of adverts telling you how bad your life is and with one click have all the answers.

Or..

Remove your phone from your bedroom. DO NOT check your phone for the first 30 mins upon waking. Your going to say but I ned it for my alarm.... get a clock! Charge it down stairs.

Give yourself a detox of your phone at least an hour before bed, no screen time no negative pictures or status. This is often a great time to do some meditation, breathing exercises or just read a few pages of a book.

Again, over the next 21 days do one of these methods. With these, you can mix and match, or pick one to be consistent with, and try the other two as much as you can. Either way, you will improve your mood, health and just be a lot happier in life. Trust me!

There will be lost of content and advice on how to optimise these methods, to stay consistent, and to maintain some relaxation of things, without going down too much of a negative slippery slope.

If you need any help or advice please message. Tick sheet is provided to help track your progress

Lets do this together! Good luck

Phil





1. Over the last 30 days, on average, how much physical, mental and emotional energy have you had? Do you feel as though you have the energy you need to do everything you want to do in life? Please give yourself a score, 1-10? (1 = I can barely drag myself out of bed, 10 = I'm on fire)

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2. Over the last 30 days, on average, what has your mood been like? How happy & optimistic have you felt? Please give yourself a score, 1-10? (1 = Suicidal, 10 = Walking on air)

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3. Over the last 30 days, on average, what have your stress/anxiety levels been like? Please give yourself a score, 1-10? (1 = Nervous wreck, 10 = Cool as a cucumber)

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4. Over the last 30 days, on average, how well have you been sleeping? Please give yourself a score, 1-10? (1 = Complete insomniac, 10 = Rip Van Winkle)

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5. Over the last 30 days, on average, how easily have you lost your temper? Please give yourself a score, 1- 10? (1 = Human time bomb, 10 = Too cool for school)

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It doesn't get much simpler than this....

If this table is full of ticks in 21 days time – you will have more physical, mental and emotional energy. You will feel happier and calmer.

You will be physically fitter and healthier and you'll have lost some weight.

Day	SO FIT/walk/home workout	Nutrition/ /IM/reduce carbs/sugar	Cold water/ breathing/ no social media	3L of water	7-9 hours Sleep	No/reduced Alcohol
1						
2						
3						
4						
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Well done!

Now re complete the questionnaire.