

Are you gaining weight and feeling listless? Here are practical tips from a master trainer in the third of a six-part series on building a healthier body.

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NOT too long ago, you were at the top of your league. You have always been athletic, exercising and participating in sports.

The trophies lining up your display cabinet are testament to your athletic achievements.

It used to take you just a few hours to recover from flu and you could eat and party without care, as none of them had any detrimental impact on you at the time.

You never thought of what you consumed as the high metabolic rate will keep you trim and fit. Well, that was once upon a time ...

As you get older, priorities change, and suddenly you spend most days sitting at the office. When you get home, you're too tired to stand up, let alone exercise. You eat on the go, skipping meals and when you do eat, you pay little concern to its content.

You promised yourself, "Once I am more established at my job, I can afford to take time off to go to the gym and burn off the calories." But the weight creeps up on you ...

What is happening?

What you're experiencing is unfortunately all too common. You gain weight because of the amount of calories you've been stuffing into your body.

The lack of exercise has caused your muscle mass to deteriorate in strength and density. Your metabolic rate is no longer what it used to be when you were physically active so the food you consume is no longer efficiently being converted to energy.

The natural processes of ageing do not help make things any better as your muscle mass loses its size as you age.

The food today is not the same as the food you consume 25 years ago; socio-economic conditions demand our livestock, fruits and plants

Motivate yourself, man!



Master trainer Afa Omar motivating Yvonne Thomas during his "Easy and Effective Home Workout" demonstration at the recent FemmeCity.

to mature faster and last longer. Growth hormones, pesticides and additives come into play. The less the physical activity you perform, the toxins have less channels to disperse and so they stay longer in your system.

If we're not careful about our lifestyle, health problems could occur. As adults, we have to be aware of our condition and understand the consequences of an unhealthy lifestyle.

So, maybe this article could be the wake-up call you need.

Now what?

Nobody said it was going easy. But it is not impossible.

It's about finding the right incentives and having realistic benchmarks, doing it step by step to make that permanent change in your life.

Exercise alone will not remove the excess weight while dieting never succeeds to permanently keep the weight off.

If you have read this article till

this paragraph, I have probably gotten your attention. This article will help remind you of what you already know all along. You know you need to make changes and you know you need help.

The weight that you gain or the sedentary diseases that you acquired happen over a long period of time in your life, so it's not going to be an overnight process to get back into shape.

We are all aware of how we feel and look but the problem most people face is motivation or rather, the lack of it. So you need to have a moment to yourself and take time to reflect and find inspiration to make the change in your life. If you take a quick look around you, the environment and setting to make these changes are more conducive than ever before.

With all of the country's development, there are now better fitness facilities. If you are not fond of paying membership for health clubs, there are many open facilities avail-



Bicycles nowadays are more modern and fun to ride.

able.

For example, Taman Tasik Perdana (Lake Gardens) is one of the most beautiful public gardens in Kuala Lumpur. DBKL has done a wonderful job at upgrading and maintaining the facility, keeping it clean and user-friendly. Another public recreational park that is popular is Taman Rimba Kiara in Taman Tun Dr Ismail Kuala Lumpur. Check the Internet to find out the nearest recreational park to where you live and give it a chance.

These are places where you can find some motivation for yourself as you blend in with many other people that share the same interest as yours; working out and keeping themselves fit.

Here you can take a walk and reflect on your youthful vigor and past achievements for further inspiration to get yourself back into shape. The lush greenery and natural surrounding can really help to calm nerves and relax your mind.

These facilities are under-utilised during weekdays, hence coming around after a stressful day at work will be a good idea. Parking is free and often, there are children's playground facilities in case your family wants to tag along while you have a brisk walk.

Wheel power

Instead of a treadmill, having a bicycle will be a more cost effective and enjoyable solution. Bicycles nowadays are more modern, com-

fortable and fun to ride.

Having one with gear-shifts are convenient to adjust to your pace. Bicycles enable you to travel faster than walking or running and can take you to places inaccessible by car, which means you might come across new places you never knew existed. Start by riding around in the idyllic setting and safety of your neighbourhood. Most apartments or condominiums have their own well-equipped fitness rooms and outdoor recreational area or swimming pool.

All you need to do is find the time and take the initiative in making use of these facilities. Only then will you find people with the same mindset.

Being around the right people will give you the opportunity to forge partnerships and find the right motivation.

In our personal and working life, we forge friendships and alliances in order to move forward and succeed. If you have had success in your working and personal life, there is no reason why your health and fitness should not be a success. It uses the same principle, approach and discipline.

If you can't find the right motivation to improve your health, find the right people and the right places to get you inspired and move you in the right direction. Your family can help inspire you; who knows, your motivatin could come from complete strangers at the park.