



EXERCISE ETHICS

*How to Set
Achievable
Goals and
Hold Yourself
Accountable*

INSIDE:

✓ Patient
Success Story

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EXERCISE ETHICS

How to Set Achievable Goals and Hold Yourself Accountable



Here we are starting a new year and true to form, there is an increased motivation to change some habit not serving or, in the opposite mode, starting a new activity hoping it will become a positive lifestyle change. To anyone who feels the urge to make positive changes in their lives, congratulations, that is the first step – to feel some interest in making a change. For some it is obvious – our post-holiday circumference at the midsection is not compatible with current pant size. Something has to give and hopefully it is not a seam; that can be embarrassing.

For others, one can start to wake up to the reality that our body is making a slow descent into greater sedentariness, stiffness, and slowness – the dreaded three “S”s.

A feeling emerges that “I have to do something.” Of the many “somethings” out there, some form of exercise is often part of the plan to improve a quality in one’s life: lose weight, improve mobility, tone up, or just feel better.

As a side note, have you ever noticed how in our world of technology, research and development, there are many who are ever so busy trying to take the work out of life? It was not so long ago in history where we made our way through physical effort, hard work, and fighting the elements. It was tough to survive and effort-saving devices were more than welcomed, and for good reason. I mean, I think those Shark vacuum cleaners are amazing and am convinced it had to be designed by someone who previously fought with one of those heavy clunkers with no versatility. Our advancement in a relatively short amount of time is quite remarkable, but really how much more convenient do we need life to become?

It is almost like there is a secret war on the idea of making life more effortless but does it not seem like we have moved quite a bit past what is needed to have convenience?

I mean come on – a car that steers itself – OMG, it’s so much work to turn this wheel and keep my attention on

the road. Thank you, GM, Tesla, etc., for taking the effort out of driving.

When it comes to movement, are we getting to be like the car that is driven 1.2 miles to work and barely reaches operating temperature before it's nuzzled into its parking space, like my drive to work? Just based on our physiology alone, we need to exert, maybe do some sweating and the like to actually not become like a car that never gets on the highway to blow out the carbon. My car in high school never built up any carbon but boy can my body get pretty sluggish if I let everything else in life become more important, which is easy to do.

THE NEW YEAR IS A GREAT TIME TO START

So the New Year can feel like a great time to “blow out some carbon,” decide to get moving and set some goals. We go buy a membership at a health club, or purchase some exercise equipment and find ourselves standing at the threshold to an adventure into ourselves.

Make no mistake, for those who have a hard time with discipline, setting out to change a habit is an adventure into learning about one's self and who is the boss of the body.

For it seems as soon as someone sets some positive goals and then starts striving to be consistent in performing a routine to reach those goals, the fire can start to wane and die down when the novelty wears off. On the backdoor to that threshold is the hard-to-confront concept of discipline

and holding true to our initial commitment. And, for sure it's usually not the body getting in the way – it's that pesky tiny little voice in our mind that attempts to undermine our consistency.

From watching many people get better in physical therapy, I know one of the key ingredients to positive change is consistency.

It is no mystery that the road to accomplishment in many areas of life travels through the jungle of procrastination and instant gratification which seeks to interrupt consistency.

And so, I introduce the concept of *exercise ethics*. Ethics are unique and quite different from morals and laws. To not track too far off course, morals and laws operate to impose control from the outside inward and there are consequences to violating them – fines, imprisonment, or maybe just the loss of a friendship.

Ethics operate from the inside out; they are our own personal self-motivated code of behavior adopted voluntarily which serves to control our decisions.

It must be at least as limiting as the laws in our legal system to avoid legal conflict. Exercise ethics is our

**WELCOME TO WINTER,
WEST MICHIGAN!**



While winter is definitely beautiful, it also comes with a host of risks for injury. In addition to shoveling, activities like scraping off your car windows or walking on snowy sidewalks can also become potential injuries!

If you've strained or over-exerted yourself in any of these seasonal activities, or if you have lingering soreness, tenderness, or pain from the snowy weather, we can help! Call us to set up an appointment today.

personal code drawn up to help us continue on as the enthusiasm of exercising begins to fade and we are left with the raw reality of controlling our ability to navigate the “jungle” toward goal attainment and accomplishment.

WHY DO YOU WANT TO EXERCISE?

Parallel to ethics in maintaining motivation to build consistency is a question quite fundamental to any activity we engage where duration and quality are needed, and that question is purpose. Why are we exercising? What is pushing us to effort and stress the body? It would serve well to define your purpose for exercise and from that your code of exercise ethics. I am exercising to _____, that is the “have” you or I want from engaging in a regular routine, and that “why” should feel deeply motivating, like you really want to reach that goal. Our code is the parameters. Walking daily for 45 minutes and getting my heartrate to _____. Build your code so you can keep it; you can always add more stringent demands to your routine, but reaching too high and not meeting the goal undermines our confidence. From this situation we would say our ethics are out. Keep your ego out of the decision and make it based on your history with discipline and your current health. In other words, make it relatively easy physically at first.

My advice to many who have trouble with discipline and holding true to a consistent exercise routine is to train the brain (mind) first to get into the habit of taking time for constructive activity before you put much physical stress on the body.

Body soreness just gives the mind another reason to rationalize and skip a day, then two and so on. People invariably start out too strong and the body rebels and the mind acquiesces. Make your exercise ethic code light and create “wins” (multiple successes over time) which overcomes the negativity of trying to change and builds confidence you can do it. Getting a good exercise habit takes months to finally have your mind and body grooved together to actually desire to move and work. When that point is reached it is a great accomplishment and you truly have navigated the worst of the “jungle.”



HOW TO TRACK YOUR ETHICS

I have worked out a method to track your exercise time-over-time to help hold your ethics. It is a simple system but gives you a method to stay not only accountable but allows you to make up time if you slip a little in your ethics. Again, form your “code” to succeed and build a more demanding ethic as your mind and body sync up to become a team against the insidious encroachment of the three “S”s. If you are starting with quite the buildup of the three “S”s, then be patient and start with a light exercise ethic code. I have mentioned this twice now, but for good reason.

If you would like help in knowing what to do and where to start, then why not begin with an evaluation from Full Potential PT? The best start begins with an understanding of where the weak links in the body are and how best to address these areas so you launch with a nice trajectory and continue forward to accomplish your goals. We can help you with the three “S”s. Our number is 616-537-2864, call and talk to a PT, make that step one in your exercise ethics code.

In this newsletter is my exercise ethic grid. Play with it and if you have any problem understanding it, write me – vince@fullpotentialpt.com – for clarification.

We are here to help as we want you to make 2024 the start of a new you.



“INHERENT IN THE WORD GOAL IS THE ACTION WORD *go*. ONCE A GOAL HAS BEEN SET, THEN *get goaling!*”

— VJH

**Has your pain come back? We can help! Call us at 616-537-2864 to book your appointment today!
Book online at FullPotentialPT.com**

EXERCISE ETHIC GRIDS

In my struggles to hold to a regular exercise routine I have tried a number of methods, but my latest is definitely my best strategy to keep me accountable. The goal at the end of my time period or the end of the year is to be at 0 deficit or better (meaning you exercised more than your goal). I am using a year as my time frame and what I am monitoring is my minutes. In my goal I am just trying to do something positive over time and prove I am the boss of my body. From this start I may advance my goal to change something, but at first, I am just trying to train my brain to do something positive on a consistent (my exercise ethic) basis.

My Exercise Ethic is 30 minutes/day of exercise (for me, 20 minutes of NordicTrac, basic core exercises, and some stretches) for a total of 170-minute goal/week. With that schedule, I can take one day off a week if wanted.

I track this on my phone in the notes section but you can go with paper or a laptop, too. Here is an example of how it worked for me the last seven weeks of this year.

Below is my daily tabulation for the last week of the year. I exercised more than my 30-minute goal as I got derailed over Thanksgiving and missed some days. The beauty of this system is I can make up missed time and get my ethics back in line and continue on through the year. So, I don't let a bad exercise week knock me off my long-term goal.

DAILY TABULATION GRID

2023: 12/25-31	Time Exercised	Total
Monday	30	30
Tuesday	32	62
Wednesday	30	92
Thursday	35	127
Friday	25	152
Saturday	25	177
Sunday	22	199

In the next column is my weekly tabulation grid. I list the total for the week and compare it to my goal for a plus/minus for that week. I killed it the first week – 185 minutes – and was 15 minutes in the surplus but then got derailed the second week with Thanksgiving and only 55 minutes.

WEEKLY TABULATION GRID

Year 2023	Wk. Total (Minutes)	Goal (Minutes)	+/- Goal (Minutes)
11/19	185	170	+15
11/26	55	170	-100*
12/03	180	170	-90
12/10	180	170	-80
12/17	202	170	-48
12/24	190	170	-28
12/31	199	170	+1

*Got behind with family and Thanksgiving but watch what happens to get my ethics back in.

So, I got behind, but by pushing more minutes later I got my exercise ethics back and finished the year with 1 minute to spare. The goal is to hit 0 or a surplus. If you chose to miss a day or mess up a week then you can readily see how to pull yourself back into ethics compliance by exceeding my 170 minute/wk. goal so I can reduce my deficit by exercising more than my goal for that week.

Obviously, there are many ways to track your consistency and keep your ethics in; it is a mental battle but it feels really good to hit that target of 0 deficit at the end of the year. That means you or I are the boss of our bodies; we did what we set out to do. As you build exercise consistency by starting light, you can advance into bigger goals. As an example, you can set it up saying “the first eight weeks my exercise ethic is 15 minutes of walking” and progress from there and say “for the next eight weeks it is 25 minutes” and continue to build through the year. At the end, we will be celebrating and slapping some high-fives. The table will adapt as you advance to give yourself a weekly indicator of how “in” your exercise ethics are over time.

As I said in the other article, we are exploring who is boss of the body for those who have trouble with consistency and discipline, which are many, including me. I hope this system helps you be boss.

To Exercise Ethics,

Vincent Hauueken, PT/Owner

PATIENT *Success* STORY



“My balance has improved and I’m feeling much safer. I will be back for more next spring following a knee replacement. The printout of exercises are put in a folder for using at home and future flare-ups – so helpful! The staff are always a ray of sunshine. Your clinic strengths excel from when calling for a first appointment until the completion of therapy. Full Potential is the best in the area. They are all a great team of knowledgeable, friendly and caring staff. I recommend Full Potential to all my friends and look forward to every appointment.”

— Joan S.

You can help someone else find THEIR Success Story — AND win a Meijer gift card!

PLAY THE REFERRAL GAME

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