

Bodysculpting for Bombshells

Fast and Easy Fitness for Loving Your Body and Feeling Desirable

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Part 1: The Basics

Chapter 1: Embracing Beauty: The Bombshell Philosophy

There is a bombshell in every woman. It's our nature. Femininity, when it has the freedom to be expressed in its fullness, is forceful and gentle, assertive and yielding, sexual and nurturing at the same time. The feminine nature is multi-faceted in co-existing opposites, but we rarely materialize the expression of all aspects that live within us. We disown one part or another to conform to social norms within our respective cultures, and most frequently, we split off physical awareness and expression because we deem it unacceptable.

We are constantly at odds with our bodies.

Can you name one woman who is not at odds with her body? Maybe you can, but it's rare. Our body becomes a battlefield of expectations about who we think we should be and our own desire to be at peace with who we are. We fight endless battles of self-criticism and self-improvement, or we disconnect from awareness of our bodies altogether.

Resolving the dilemma is harder than it seems. We veer in and out of buying into social expectations, returning to body-awareness only when we feel good about ourselves. Sometimes we admit we have a body, sometimes we ignore it and act as if we don't.

You know your self-esteem shouldn't depend on how you look, but divorcing self-esteem from appearance only works for some women, not others. Some women are naturally beautiful, and others have rock-solid self-esteem despite the absence of what their society defines as physical beauty. Most of us are neither blessed with natural beauty nor rock-solid self-esteem, and most of us enjoy physical and sensual expression only on "good days".

Denying the unfairness of genes works only to some extent. In truth, nature isn't fair.

As a woman in the United States, how you appear at any given age is part of your currency. It's a non-monetary stock market investment. Men's value appreciates with age. Their portfolio and earning potential increases, and they're perceived as more desirable because of the increased security they provide. Women's value depreciates with age, because youth is associated with fertility and health. Even men who've had plenty of children with numerous ex-wives are attracted to women who suggest fertility and health. In other words, youth. It's wired into our evolutionary instinct.

Overweight women are perceived as "out of control," while overweight men are merely perceived as "lacking discipline." The road to eating disorders and Body Dysmorphic Disorder is already paved.

Women who reach the age of 35 are considered "past their prime." Desirability has an expiration date. Larger sized women are "not supposed to" feel desirable because the beauty ideal dictates clothing sizes fit for teenage girls.

It gets worse. A *TIME* magazine article from June 29, 2015 about the social pressures of receiving cosmetic procedures quoted a study that found above-average looking people earning up to \$230,000 more throughout their life time than their average looking counterparts.

How do we withstand the pressure?

We either conform by entering the manic quest for perfection, or we split off sensual awareness of our bodies because the feelings of inadequacy are too painful. We sway back and forth between these extremes, liking ourselves most when we are closest to the expectation we hold. We rarely feel at home in our own skin.

If we want to become whole again, we must boldly claim ownership of our physical self. Unedited physical expression is sumptuous, exuberant, sensual and highly desirable if we suspend judgment and allow ourselves to be present in our bodies. A woman who owns her physical expression without shame is desirable at any size or age. Her innate sensuality defies cultural norms. She'll be a whole lot happier, too. She has recovered her *bombshell nature*.

How is it done? The first step is giving yourself permission. You too, are a bombshell at heart. The next step is getting back into your body through movement. Use exercise to enhance and heal the relationship you have with your body. Beauty is a mindset, not a clothing size.

When was the last time you felt truly comfortable in your body? It was most likely after you were physically active. Movement awakens body awareness.

Exercise can alter body size and shape if you desire to do so. If you are truly uncomfortable with your size and shape, change it. You can make your body a work of art and shape it like a sculpture. It takes time, effort and commitment, but it can be done.

However, exercising for the quest of perfection can be emotionally devastating and damage self-esteem. Don't exercise to find yet another way of beating yourself up. Define your own goals and make loving your body the highest priority. Treat your physical self like a temple that houses your spirit.

Exercise is on everyone's to-do list, yet there's always a good reason not to. For many people, exercise is annoying; it's not fun, and it gets boring. The process of fitness can be as daunting as fixing an engine if you don't know how it's done. Reading large volumes on exercise science isn't everyone's idea of a good time, and fitness magazines offer quick fixes that rarely yield results.

We don't need yet another failed attempt.

I've tried to keep this book short and sweet. Knowing a few simple facts about exercise reduces time commitment and frustration. The following pages won't give you a complicated workout regime but an understanding of what works and why. The practical instruction will be a sample whole body workout which you can use, alter, or build from. It's all you need to get started, get comfortable in your skin again, and see significant changes or lose weight if you wish. It's not rocket science, after all.

Don't wait until you lost weight, and don't beat yourself up if you haven't been able to. You can, but you don't need to change your body size to recover your bombshell nature. Larger women can sculpt their bodies into voluptuous shapes. *Sports Illustrated* of February 2016

featured Ashley Graham on the cover, a size 16 swimsuit model. When artfully sculpted, curvy is feminine beauty.

I credit my friend Amber Rice, a San Diego-based marriage and family therapist, with modeling ownership of beauty at any size. I learned from her that bombshells come in all sizes and ages, because beauty emerges from ownership.

Chapter 2: Building Beauty: What You Need To Know About Exercise

Exercise is annoying. If it wasn't, you'd be doing it. You'd be exercising regularly, you would look and feel fantastic, and you'd be so accustomed to receiving compliments about your great shape that it wouldn't be any more exciting than collecting the mail.

Maybe you'll argue that exercise isn't annoying because you feel great after you do it, but there's still something about your physical shape that's nagging you or you wouldn't read a book about it. Perhaps you exercise occasionally but don't stick with it for reasons you can't put your finger on.

Maybe you've put it off because you don't know how it's done, or you put in countless hours at the gym and it doesn't make the difference you anticipated. You feel stuck in a body you'd rather hide, and exercise is too time consuming. You think you're not cut out to look or feel good because you're too big-boned, too short or too old, or you don't have the right genes. You may even think you need to lose weight *before* you start exercising.

Learning to exercise correctly is surprisingly simple and can be summarized into short, easy-to-follow steps. It'll be far less annoying if you know what you're doing and why.

The strongest motivating factor for exercise is the ability to reap its many rewards. Often, people quit because they haven't learned how to do it correctly. Investments without returns are worth dropping, after all.

Once you experience the physical transformation of body composition—less fat, more lean mass, faster metabolism, higher energy levels, graceful mobility, comfortable flexibility, improved health and the joy of inhabiting a body you love—it becomes harder to quit. Why would you give something up that makes you feel better, more beautiful, and more energetic?

Investments that reap high returns are worth keeping.

Learning to exercise correctly is not as self-explanatory as it might seem. You must have had at least one friend who worked out for hours every day, limped home, complained about it and quit. They quit because the investment had no viable returns, so you wouldn't want to waste your time this way.

However, don't blame your genes or the gym. Who taught your friend how to implement exercise science? Was it a high school gym teacher, or did your friend read a stack of fitness magazines that promised results?

There is no single exercise that guarantees results. If there were, we wouldn't be battling our bodies; we'd be doing the right exercise and looking great.

All exercises work if you know how to:

- A) Understand the different modes of exercises
- B) Grow a muscle
- C) Combine exercises

You need an owner's manual and a road map. Once you have the tools, you'll achieve the changes you were looking for. The ideal mixture of cardiovascular and weight training will speed up your metabolism, skyrocket your energy levels, change your body composition and improve your health. Your owner's manual is basic knowledge of exercise science, and your road map is The Basic Workout provided in the Practical Instruction section of this book.

Combine Weight Training, Cardiovascular Exercise, And Stretching

This will take less time than you think, and you can play favorites when it comes to particular exercises as long as you don't discriminate. If you use only one mode of exercise, such as the treadmill, you are short-changing yourself and not getting the most out of what the gym has to offer.

Each type of exercise serves a different purpose. Cardiovascular training increases energy levels. Weight training builds muscle. Stretching keeps you flexible. If you've exercised at a gym before, have you utilized only one or two modes of exercise? If so, were you fully satisfied with the results?

If you specialize on spending hours on the treadmill, you'll have more energy and feel fit, but your body will stay soft and flabby. You'll get tight hamstrings or pain in your back. Your upper body will begin to lose the battle against gravity and you'll hunch forward, which will ruin your posture and only lead to more back pain.

If you favored lifting weights, you may be toned and shapely, but you'll wonder why you don't feel energetic. Your mobility will decrease as your movements become limited from tight muscles. Watch your step. Has it gotten shorter?

If you stretch like a cat, you'll be graceful and in less pain than the average person in your age group, but you'll never have straight lean lines of muscle mass. Gravity will get you when its pull becomes stronger than the pull of your muscles, and you'll hunch. You might feel fit, but you won't be. Try outrunning parking enforcement before they ticket your car. Gasping for air yet?

Which Mode Of Exercise Serves Which Purpose?

Let's take a quick look at the purpose of each mode of exercise. This will be part of your owner's manual. We'll go through each mode in greater detail in the related chapters. For now, you need to know the basics.

Cardiovascular fitness relates to picking up speed and keeping it up. When we fantasize about fitness, we usually envision having the energy and endurance we once took for granted a decade or two ago.

Cardiovascular exercise is a low to medium intensity activity such as running on a treadmill or running outdoors, or using an elliptical walker or StairMaster. It's a mode of exercise you can sustain over long periods of time.

At a gym, the majority of women will spend their time on cardio equipment. The goal of hour-long cardiovascular training is burning fat. Yes, cardiovascular exercise burns calories and fat, but it will never burn fat as effectively as it will when it's combined with weight lifting. Also, cardiovascular training yields results according to heart rate training zones, which you must know if you don't want to waste your time. We'll cover the mystery of heart rate training zones in the chapter on cardiovascular exercise.

The main function of cardiovascular exercise is strengthening the heart and improving oxygen consumption. Improved oxygen consumption means that higher levels of oxygen circulate through your system and lung capacity is greater. Oxygen boosts your energy better than cocaine; it's legal and it won't destroy your dopamine receptors. Just kidding. Oxygen is a miracle drug. Try it.

Most health benefits are related to cardiovascular training. Type 2 Diabetes can be improved with a combination of exercise and nutrition. High blood pressure can be lowered—the systolic and diastolic pressure. Triglycerin, the level of fat in the blood, can be lowered. A stronger heart, obviously, is a protective factor against heart attacks.

At the gym, weight training is the less popular pastime—lifting heavy objects to build lean muscle mass and increase strength.

Why do you need strength? Even if your boyfriend/husband/secret lover carries your grocery bags and works on your car, you still need strength. Strength is a byproduct of straight, lean muscular lines across your body where flab once resided. You may not lift weights because you want to get stronger, but you do want lean muscle mass. Every cut, rip, or straight line on a toned body is muscle mass. We cannot tone fat, only muscle.

Lifting heavy objects burns an awful lot of calories. You can't burn as many calories in an hour on a treadmill as you can when lifting weights. Increased lean muscle mass burns more calories than the absence of muscle does, so building muscle mass can speed up a sluggish metabolism. The more lean muscle mass you have, the higher your metabolism.

Stretching is essential because it helps regain or maintain your range of motion. Range of motion is the angle at which your bones can move across a joint. If you don't stretch, you'll get tighter as you age. The range of motion becomes smaller until movement is very limited. Tight muscles pull on joints and bones, causing pain. The tighter a muscle is, the more prone you will be to pulls, injuries, and pinched nerves.

Cardiovascular Exercise and Weight Lifting Use Different Energy Systems

Feed a muscle, starve the fat. Know the difference.

To do so, you need to understand the body's energy systems. Energy systems are the metabolic processes that turn food into energy, which we refer to as calories. You need to know which system does what, so you can tailor your time investment to what you want to accomplish.

One (anaerobic) energy system utilizes stored sugars to do heavy work for very short periods of time. The next two (anaerobic) energy systems use sugars for heavy work that lasts half a minute or up to three minutes. The last (aerobic) energy system provides energy for light work that takes very long periods of time.

Anaerobic means the systems need sugars or calories as fuel. Aerobic means the system uses oxygen and eventually fat storages.

For example, lifting a heavy box is hard work for a short period of time. Carrying heavy grocery bags is hard work that takes a longer period of time. Running or fast walking is light work that may take a very long time. Each activity draws fuel from a different energy system.

Since running or fast walking both use the aerobic energy system that will turn to fat storages when sugars run out, cardiovascular training has become the most popular activity for weight loss. It works, but the downside is that you have to run several hours every day to see significant weight loss.

There's a more effective way to get the job done, which is why I cautioned you to combine all modes of exercise for best results. The trick is to use the right energy system at the right time.

Weight lifting burns far more calories than cardiovascular training, in far less time. Weight lifting will increase and maintain a higher metabolism over time. As noted earlier, muscle needs more calories to sustain itself.

Feed a muscle, starve the fat.

A muscle needs fuel to get work done. The fuel is calories, or more specifically, stored sugars.

You may claim you've had no sugar today, but your sneaky body has turned a lot of your food into glucose and stored it as glycogen. Glucose is a pretty word for sugar. Glucose is made from the simple or complex carbohydrates you ate. When carbohydrates are converted into glycogen and stored in blood, muscle, and various other locations, the sugar becomes fuel.

Feed the muscle by eating complex carbohydrates before lifting weights. You'll burn the calories during the workout, the muscles will be happy because they had enough fuel, and they'll grow during rest.

Weight lifting creates an afterburn, which means the metabolism kicked into high gear from doing heavy work. The afterburn lasts up to twelve hours. You'll burn more calories even while resting on the couch, which comes in handy for weight loss.

However, if you don't feed the muscle before doing heavy work, it gets messy. Heavy work needs heavy fuel. If you have no stored glucose in your system because you starved yourself, the body will begin to break down its own protein as fuel. Muscle and tissue are made from

protein. Using up your own lean muscle mass as fuel is a bad idea, especially if your goal is to build muscle and increase metabolism.

You may have heard a lot of talk about eating protein before and after lifting weights. Yes, muscle needs extra protein for building, but it doesn't matter when you eat it. You can add protein to the carbohydrates as fuel before weight lifting, but protein isn't an ideal source for quick energy. Protein takes up to three hours to digest. Carbohydrates are available as fuel as quickly as thirty minutes after eating.

As long as you consume enough protein during the day, you're covered. We'll go over protein intake when we discuss nutrition.

Cardiovascular training is less capricious. You don't need to worry about feeding your muscles. During cardiovascular training, the muscles don't do heavy work; they do light work over long periods of time.

Cardiovascular training turns more easily to drawing from fat storages when fuel runs out. It's an evolutionary perk to guarantee survival. If you were a tribal hunter, you may need to migrate and hunt for a long time on an empty stomach before you catch your dinner. Or you may need to migrate until you find vegetarian food sources.

During cardiovascular training, you mimic migration. You keep moving for long periods of time. Running on nearly used up fuel is the right time to draw from fat storages. Evolution set it up that way. You have to be able to keep moving until you secure food supplies or the human species may die off.

Feed the muscle so it can grow. Take in calories when they are needed. Deplete fat storages by migrating on cardio equipment. Run on empty when you can afford to.

One way of maximizing returns is lifting weights first and using stored glucose. Follow this with cardiovascular exercise to deplete fat storages. You'll build muscle and lose fat.

There are additional ways of kicking a slow metabolism into high gear. Let's dedicate the next chapter to it.

Increasing And Maintaining Metabolism Is Key To Weight Loss

Are you sick of struggling with your weight? Are you frustrated with diets? Diet and changing nutritional habits are important, but the bad guy in the game is a slow metabolism.

Increasing and maintaining a higher metabolic rate is essential for losing weight and keeping it off.

For the sake of clarity, metabolic rate means the rate at which your body burns calories. Your metabolism may be naturally slow or fast, depending on several genetic factors as well as habitual activity levels.

If you have a slow metabolism, your body is geared for survival. You'd be the lucky one who'd still be standing when a starvation period set in, let's say during the Stone Age. Unfortunately, we don't value outlasting starvation periods a whole lot in present day America, and you don't care much for your body's special talent.

If you have a high metabolism, you'll know. You're the one who could always eat what she wanted without gaining weight.

Unfortunately, both slow and fast metabolisms are subject to aging, and that's when things go haywire. After the age of thirty, the body begins to break down its lean muscle mass. It's the beginning of a steady decline. If you had a fast metabolism, you may not notice until your mid-thirties. After the mid-thirties, it'll get more dramatic with every decade.

Muscle mass requires more calories to sustain itself. Once muscle begins to disappear, your body's caloric needs decline. You may not eat more than you used to, but inexplicable weight gain sets in. Taking it off is harder than it used to be. With increasing age, we turn chubby.

Once you notice the inexplicable weight gain, your rational reaction may be to turn to dieting.

Dieting may be necessary if you have more than 15 pounds to lose, and I recommend enlisting a medically supervised diet program. If you must, get help from qualified professionals. Unsupervised diets can be harmful to your health.

Some medically supervised diets are so stringent that you may not be permitted to exercise, but this is only the case for severe obesity and only in the beginning stages.

In the absence of severe and medically critical obesity, diets are best combined with exercise. The reason is not losing weight faster, but increasing and maintaining metabolism.

Crash diets trigger the alarm system of starvation mode. Diets without exercise also trigger starvation mode, only less rapidly. When starvation mode sets in, your faithful body will do its best to save your life by slowing down its metabolic rate. Yes, thanks a lot. But bodies are geared toward survival, and we have to collaborate respectfully with this valuable function or we will end up hating the body that serves us so well.

Starvation mode is in effect when you notice the weight loss slowing down during dieting. You'll still reach your target weight if you're patient, but then you're faced with a dilemma.

The weight came off, but your metabolism is slower than ever. Perhaps you've even lost some muscle mass, decreasing metabolic needs further.

Either you stick with the low caloric intake your body now requires, or you'll regain the weight rapidly. If you used a supervised diet program, you may receive help tapering off the diet without regaining the weight, but few people are able to keep it off unless they exercise.

Luckily, your goals and your body's survival functions can all get along by negotiating your diet, your metabolism, and your target weight. Use diplomatic skill with your body and create win-win situations. Honor your body's survival instincts by avoiding starvation mode and work diligently at increasing and maintaining your metabolism.

How is it done? Pair a reasonable diet with a reasonable regimen of cardiovascular exercise and weight lifting. Build lean muscle mass. The more muscle you have, the more calories you need. If you keep building muscle while dieting, you increase your metabolic rate instead of slowing it down too much.

Don't wait until you lose the weight. Do it all at once. This will make it easier to keep the weight off once you have lost it.

Here's another handy fact about metabolism: bodies adapt and build habits.

The more you increase your metabolism through cardiovascular training and weight lifting, the more your body gets used to it. If you consistently spike up your metabolism, the body becomes accustomed to burning calories at a higher rate. It's called changing your metabolic baseline. Changing the metabolic baseline translates into changing the body's previous comfort zone of burning calories slowly to burning calories at a higher rate.

There's a catch, though.

Your body is accustomed to a set point of weight and will react a bit nervously when you intend to change it. Your body is also a tad inflexible when it comes to changing the metabolic baseline.

What do you do? Use diplomacy. Honor the fact that the body takes a while to get used to a new comfort zone and help it along with consistent practice.

A little bit of exercise daily is better than a lot of exercise twice a week. Thirty minutes a day can do a lot to change your metabolic baseline.

You may not be able to fit cardiovascular and weight training into a thirty-minute session, but you can spend half an hour on each, or alternate between weight lifting days and cardiovascular days. Or you can combine cardio and weights on some days, and fit in shorter cardiovascular sessions on alternate days.

Long hours at the gym are counter-productive. Committing to that much time is rarely sustainable. Unless you seriously want to spend long hours at the gym every day, it will be more productive to exercise for shorter periods of time.

Cardiovascular exercise can be done every day, even though you should take a minimum of one day off for rest. If you're running, you shouldn't run more than 30 miles per week because of the impact on the knees. If you are using cardiovascular equipment of low impact (such as an elliptical walker or bicycle) you can exceed 30 miles.

Weight lifting cannot be done every day. Beginners must work the entire body including all nine major muscle groups two to three times a week, allowing for a 48-hour resting period. Lift weights every other day.

Split routines will be discussed in greater detail in another chapter. You can split upper and lower body weight training into alternate days to cut down the time commitment, but you would need to head to the gym six days a week. Six days a week is a lofty commitment, and also less sustainable.

Shoot for weight training three times a week if you can, and fill in with shorter cardiovascular sessions as often as you can stand it.

Don't forget stretching. Stretch 10 to 15 minutes after every bout of exercise.

Both cardio and weights will spike your metabolism if the intensity is high enough. We'll cover intensity for both modes of exercise in separate chapters. First, let's do away with the myth of bulky women.

Muscle Does Not Become Bulky On Women

If you want to see one hell of a difference, you may need to lift heavier weights than you think.

In case you're concerned, lean muscle mass on women creates the lean, toned look—not the bulky one. That is, unless you have an unusually high amount of testosterone running through your system, which is rare. You'd already know if you had high levels of male hormones, because you'd have several issues that come with hormonal imbalance. Are you a woman sporting a beard? Do you have a deep, raspy voice and a large Adam's apple? No? Then you're fine. You won't get bulky.

Even for male or female bodybuilders, building bulk requires nearly superhuman effort along with dedication, discipline, sacrifice, highly specialized training and sports nutrition. If getting bulky was as easy as lifting a heavy dumbbell or two, all men would look like superheroes. They don't, do they? It's not easy and it doesn't happen by accident. Bulky physiques are rare, for a good reason.

Muscle is anything that's firm on your body. Any line, rip or curve is muscle. We all want firm lines, but we're afraid the firm lines would turn into pumpkin-sized clobbers.

Here's a personal trainer joke. A new client comes in and says, "I want to get toned, but I don't want any muscle."

The trainer replies, "What are we going to tone? Your fat?"

It can't be done. If you want the firm lines, you have to build muscle.

Muscles need to receive enough stimulus to grow, which means you need to move from light to heavy weights to provide the necessary stimulus for growth. Heavy is subjective, but we will cover gauging the right amount of weight for you in the chapter on weight training.

If you're still on the fence about the dangers of getting bulky, I dare you to run an experiment.

Go ahead and build up to lifting "heavy." Build up slowly and safely, and see what happens. See if you like it. At worst, you'll look like Madonna. If you don't like her, no problem. Losing muscle is easier than gaining it. Lighten the weights and the muscles will get smaller. Or, if you passionately hate your muscled look, take a two- to four-week hiatus from weight lifting.

Muscle develops only as a response to demand. If there is no more demand, it will atrophy. Atrophy means the muscle shrinks, so it'll disappear in no time if you don't like it.

Like it and keep it, or dislike it and lose it. You'll learn a lot about bodysculpting by experimenting with muscle sizes. You can make muscle bigger or smaller and change looks as often as you like. Treat it like a theme party. Be Madonna for one party and Gwyneth Paltrow for another.

A fine perk of heavy lifting is that you can burn 700 calories or more in an hour. Heavy lifting is followed by a massive afterburn. In my mind, the afterburn following heavy weight lifting makes it feel as if fat is rapidly melting off my frame.

Let's bust another myth. Muscle fiber doesn't turn into fat tissue when you quit weight training. Muscle fiber and fat tissue are different materials. Muscle is built from strands of protein. Fat is adipose tissue. One cannot convert into the other.

If you lose body fat, the fat cells deflate. You can't lose fat cells; they'll stay where they are. The mean little things are constantly on call. Fat cells will inflate again if excess calories need to be stored. The location of your fat cells is genetically determined.

The location of muscle fiber and its type is also genetically determined. There are different types of muscle fiber. There's one for strength, one for a mixture of strength and endurance, and one for endurance only.

Men have a genetically higher distribution of strength fiber in their upper bodies. It's easier for men to build large upper body muscle based on their fiber type. Men's lung capacity is also greater. Women have far less strength fiber distribution in their upper bodies, but almost the same amount of strength fiber in their legs. Theoretically, you could build rather large leg muscles.

I recommend watching the weight load on the leg muscles so you get the exact size you want. We typically want our legs slim but muscular. Think of female cyclists. The outer portion of their thighs, called the *vastus lateralis*, can become massive from excessive training. If leg muscles become larger than you like, decrease the weights.

Female upper bodies thrive on heavy weights. You can't go too heavy on the triceps, located on the backside of your upper arm. Fighting flab requires heavy lifting. Shoulders will turn into a beautifully rounded cut. Bicep muscles will complement the straight lean line of well-defined triceps.

I've talked countless female clients into lifting heavier than they'd planned, and I haven't come across a single woman who didn't like her new arms.

Be aware of the in-between period when you're changing body composition, and don't mistake it as growing bulk. As a reminder, changing body composition means increasing lean muscle mass and decreasing fat tissue. When you first begin increasing muscle, it can look as if you're getting bigger. There are still layers of fat on top of the newly developing muscle. Don't worry; it's a transition. Once you lose fat, the straight lean lines will emerge. Muscle tissue is denser than adipose tissue, and your overall size will become smaller.

If achieving a smaller size is not your goal, you may be satisfied with the merits of the in-between period. Building muscle underneath fat tissue will tighten your figure into luscious curves. A previously flabby stomach can be firm and shapely in its fullness. A full-figured waist can turn into a glorious hourglass. Large buttocks can be lifted and tightened. Think Jennifer Lopez. Would we advise her to be stick-thin? Size can be an advantage if beautifully sculpted.

If in doubt about your work of art, ask for a man's opinion. He'll tell you whether you've succeeded in sculpting the extra pounds into the physique of a Greek goddess.

Here's another perk of heavy lifting which I adore. Theoretically, you can't get rid of cellulite. I haven't found anything in the professional literature that suggests you can. Yet, I've seen cellulite disappear on clients and myself. As cellulite-ridden as I was in my twenties, there's nothing left of it in my mid-forties. I've seen it on hundreds of female clients who dared to build muscular thighs, hips, and buttocks. It may be that fat cells deflate with weight

loss and the skin tightens when it expands across muscular lines. I can't back it up scientifically, but I know it works. You can look far better in a bikini in your fifties than in your twenties if you build muscle.

Are you up for the experiment of heavy lifting? I'll assume you are. How could you resist? Remember to build slowly from light to heavy, and don't get carried away by the enthusiasm of getting started.

“No Pain, No Gain” Ran Out Of Fashion In The 1980s

Don't brag about getting sore. It's no reason to be proud.

You've heard it before, I'm sure: “I went to the gym, and I'm so sore! I worked out!”

It's a popular battle cry at any gym, but from a professional point of view, it's advertising that you don't know what you're doing. And worse, you've caused yourself an injury and now you're so proud of it that you tell everyone: “I went to the gym yesterday and I worked very hard on ruining my shoulder joints, knees, or elbows. I did great! I'm only about 20 years away from giving myself arthritis. I did well today. I got something done!”

“No pain, no gain” is another myth about exercise, originating in the 1980s. It's not only outdated, it's soon to be ancient.

How do you know you're sore?

The perception of soreness is highly subjective. One client may feel sore after lifting a three-pound dumbbell. Another client denies feeling sore after tearing up his muscles and being unable to lift his arm.

Let's identify a *right* and a *wrong* kind of soreness.

The *right* kind of soreness announces its presence 36 hours post workout. I call it the muscles' awakening, caused by increased blood flow and oxygen transport. You'll feel minor tightness, heaviness, fatigue or tenderness. Growing a muscle requires straining it just past its previous capacity, so there is a microscopic injury. A microscopic injury is appropriate. Increased blood flow is part of the healing process. The muscles will look bigger or “pumped” temporarily due to minor swelling. The sensation should be noticeable but pleasant. You should notice that you did work, but you should never be in pain.

The *wrong* kind of soreness is pain. The muscles are not microscopically but majorly injured, and become so stiff and painful you can barely move. Repeated major injury to the muscle tissue leads to arthritis. In the worst case scenario, muscle can tear and if incorrectly rehabilitated, grow back mildly deformed.

You can get painfully sore from weight lifting or from running 20 miles. When there is pain, you did too much too soon. The body was not prepared to work as hard, and the muscles were strained to the point of injury.

Exercise can be a wellspring of health and restoration or a source of severe harm, depending on its application.

Let me explain the risk of arthritis.

Imagine that the muscles repeatedly work far harder than they're capable of. The muscles aren't strong enough to hold up the weights at this time. Along with tearing up more muscle tissue than necessary, heavy weights pull on the joints. The joints become overloaded. Joints are delicate structures that can be worn down, damaged or torn. Excessive muscular soreness leads to excessive tightness. Excessive tightness creates a very strong pull on the joints, since muscles attach from one bone to another by crossing a joint. Imagine the joint was strained by heavy weights, and now tight muscles pull on it for days to come. The joints will crack loudly

in protest when you try to move. Over time, such joint abuse is likely to create arthritis. Arthritis sets in years later. You won't remember which boot camp caused it.

Boot camps can be a great tool for weight loss as long as you have a solid foundation of muscle mass and you don't get sore. Beginners should not attend boot camps. Yes, this is a conservative approach to fitness, and you may hate it and toss this book aside. Getting in the best shape of your life in three months is an unbeatable selling point, but an unethical approach for a company or boot camp to make, in my opinion.

Bragging about or striving for major soreness is more common for men. The warrior comes home, proudly showing off his battle wounds after defeating the enemy. Yet, I have seen my share of competitive professional women who approach the gym and their bodies like a battlefield, seeking glorious victory over their physical limitations. When I refused to push them into maximum soreness boot camp-style, they perceived their sessions as a waste of time and quit.

Don't dance to this 1980s tune.

Taking pride in getting sore at the gym is like bragging about buying a two-seater plane and climbing in without instruction. You get it off the ground, cruise around, and then you crash it because you had no clue how to fly. If you live to tell your story, you say, "Boy, did I ever fly this plane! There's nothing left of it!"

All the while, the rest of us are thinking, "Well, maybe you should have gotten a pilot's license before you got in? Taken a few classes, or read the owner's manual, at least?"

You get the point. We'll cover gauging intensity in the chapter on weight training. You'll learn how to identify your ideal starting weights, and how to increase the load safely so you'll experience consistent change without risking injury.

Have you met your muscles in person yet, and do you know them by name? When gauging intensity, you'll need to be intimately familiar with each muscle group so you can pay attention for feedback from your body. If you know your muscles and their location, your body awareness increases. Paying attention to the sensations in the various muscle groups will aid in restoring your relationship with your body.

Let's Learn Latin: The Major Muscle Groups

This is a bit dry, but you need to know your muscle groups. I don't want to throw Latin words at you if you've no clue where the foreign thing is located. We'll stick with the general area when discussing exercises, but you need to know which ones are triceps or biceps, quadriceps and hamstrings, so you're clear on what muscle you're targeting and paying close attention to.

There are nine major muscle groups. For the sake of simplicity, we will treat the "core" as one muscle group. It'll make it easier to remember the blue print of a full body workout, which you'll find in the Basic Workout.

Technically, the core consists of three separate muscle groups. These are the agonist, antagonist and supporting muscles of your midsection—or the abdominals, the lower back muscles and the obliques around your waist. The core is your center of gravity, the origin and balancing point of all movement, and the supporting structure on which the entire weight of the upper body rests.

Core: Abdominals: Rectus abdominus (the stomach muscles)

Back Extensors: Erector spinae (small muscles around your lumbar spine above the pelvis)

Obliques: Abdominal muscles at your waist

Chest: Pectoralis major

Back: Latissimus dorsi

Triceps: Triceps brachii (back or outer portion of the upper arm)

Biceps: Biceps brachii (top or inner portion of the upper arm)

Shoulder: Deltoid

Quadriceps: Quadriceps femoris (top of the thigh)

Hamstrings: Biceps femoris (back of the thigh)

Calf: Soleus or Gastrocnemius

Respect The Laws Of Architecture: Work All Nine Major Muscle Groups

If your body is your temple and the home of your eternal spirit, you want that temple to be built by a skilled architect. Amateurs need not apply. You want your temple to be built so solidly that it can withstand an earthquake, and the roof shouldn't collapse during stormy weather. When exercising, you need to think like an architect or the structure will eventually cave in.

Your musculoskeletal frame is your temple's foundation. The bones, muscles, ligaments and joints of upper and lower body are interconnected and stabilized by the core. The more solid your foundation, the better and longer it will hold up. A solid foundation requires that all structural elements support each other at an ideal ratio.

The heart needs to be strong enough to circulate oxygen and the oxygen intake through the lungs needs to be optimal, which can be accomplished by cardiovascular training.

When lifting weights, you must build up and maintain all nine major muscle groups to create a lasting structure. If you are to play favorites, pick the core. As the center of gravity, core strength provides the most stability to your structure.

Exercising all nine major muscle groups is the most essential and yet the most unknown factor in weight training. At any gym, on any given day, you can observe the majority of gym patrons working away heartily at providing orthopedic surgeons and physical therapists with future patients. If you listen closely, you may even hear the chorus of bragging about sports injuries.

Performing random mismatched exercises does more harm than good.

Since all structural elements of your musculoskeletal foundation are interconnected, exercising select muscle groups while ignoring others will cause muscular imbalances.

For example, working a muscle makes it stronger. When a muscle is stronger, it creates a stronger pull. Now, imagine you worked very hard on your back muscles. Imagine how the stronger back muscles create a stronger pull. What happens? You end up arching backward. If you arch backward, your spine will no longer be straight because its natural alignment derails. A misaligned spine squeezes discs or compresses vertebrae, which results in pain.

A straight spine is a healthy spine. Since muscles work in pairs of agonist and antagonist, you need to work each pair equally. An easier way of imagining agonist and antagonist is envisioning the front and back of your body. The spine is in between the front and back. Work both sides, and the spine will stay in alignment.

The same applies to any joint. Muscles attach from one bone across a joint to another.

Imagine the arm. You can bend it, and you can straighten it. The muscle pair on the upper arm is biceps and triceps. The biceps bends the arm, the triceps straightens it. If one pulls stronger than the other, it will damage the delicate structure of the joint in between the upper and lower arm because upper arm muscles attach to the bones of the lower arm.

Sports injuries result either from overuse, traumatic injury, or most often, muscular imbalance. Muscular imbalance is when one muscle of a pair is stronger than its counterpart.

I call the simple routine I'm going to show you in the practical instruction section the *Basic Workout*, because it gives you one exercise for each of the nine major muscle groups. Think of it as a blueprint for a professional workout. It's a place to start, build from, do variations of, and add exercises to. Every workout routine, no matter how advanced, is only a variation of the Basic Workout.

Remember the major muscle groups, and create your exercise regimens according to the laws of architecture.

Breaking News: You Can't Spot-Reduce

A popular myth about weight training will tell you that exercise will shrink an area of your body where you hold weight; your abdomen, for example. Lots of crunches are supposed to melt the fat. Unfortunately, fat won't disappear in the places you build muscle unless you lose weight.

Where you lose fat deposits is genetically determined and there's nothing you can do other than liposuction. Liposuction hurts, is expensive, and the fat deposits often return because your genetic program decides the location is a good choice.

You might ask, why get into bodysculpting if you can't spot reduce? We can't sculpt fat, but we can sculpt muscle. We can make muscle bigger, smaller or add the personal touch of a shape we desire.

Fat may sit stubbornly on top of beautifully sculpted muscle, but you can't see the muscular cuts until the fat deposit decreases.

Luckily, muscle fiber is smaller and denser than fat deposits, and building muscle will make your physique tighter. You can be a plus-sized bombshell and tighten your curves into luscious shapes. The fat won't disappear in the areas you worked, but the form will change. Full-figured women with great muscular tone are bigger in size, and a bigger size can look stunning when it's tightened into a Rubenesque work of art.

If you don't like Rubenesque, or you desire a smaller size and want to lose weight, you'll have to work on changing body composition with weight lifting, cardiovascular training, stretching, and dietary change.

Exercise Is the Ultimate Anti-Aging Program

Once you reach age 30, the body begins its steady decline of physical breakdown. The metabolism slows down due to the gradual loss of muscle mass, and the musculoskeletal frame becomes weaker and more fragile with every decade.

This was acceptable when the average life expectancy was around 40—say, in the early 1900s in the United States—but it's no longer acceptable since we've begun outliving the timelines of our skeletons. The body wasn't meant to last as long as our lives do now!

Nicholas A. DiNubile, an orthopedic surgeon and author of *Frame Work*, writes that you lose four percent of your muscle mass each decade after age 25. After age 40, he writes that you lose one percent per year. There are different estimates of how much muscle mass you lose, but I consider his writing and research reliable. Either way, the body's breakdown begins earlier than expected and the consequence is the toll old age takes on our bodies.

Almost everyone understands the practicality of having a retirement fund. Investing in mobility during retirement is less common. Do you still want to be walking when you use that retirement fund? Fragile old age can be avoided with weight training and upkeep of muscle mass. Fragility is the result of weakness. Stiffness is the result of lost flexibility. Fragile old age is not natural, but a consequence of lifestyle choices.

While you can still build muscle past age 90, starting early gives you a protective edge.

Maintaining muscle mass and flexibility will save you from back, neck, knee and shoulder problems, which can become severe enough that surgery is the last resort. Many back and knee surgeries can be avoided by maintaining the necessary muscle, since muscle buffers movement and protects the spine and joints. Most back issues can be remedied effectively with correct exercise. Most knee problems can be improved significantly, as well.

A Swedish study explored the difference between chronological and biological age in relation to fertility. Chronological age is the number of years that have passed since your birth. Biological age is the estimated age of your muscles, bones, organs, and brain. The study found increased fertility in very fit women between the ages of 40 and 50. Biologically, these women's organs were younger than the unconditioned and out of shape control group. You won't simply feel better or even younger, but your body will age less rapidly.

There are current studies about possibly better cognitive skills in seniors who exercise compared to those who don't, due to the increased blood flow to the brain. These studies are still inconclusive, but it's worth considering. Improved blood flow to the brain means more oxygen. Oxygen is the energy miracle drug. Stay tuned for the studies when they conclude.

Starting early and continuing to build lean muscle mass will also make you leaner with advancing decades. Imagine getting leaner and more sensuous as you age! Imagine enjoying your physicality in your sixties, versus expecting to be finished with life as a woman because your good years are supposedly over. For some of us, our values will shift as we age and we may find more fulfillment nurturing the next generation, rather than seeking enjoyment in living in a beautiful body. But what if the old paradigms are shifting and we can continue enjoying our physicality far past the time previous generations did?

“Old and tired” is so last century. We have new role models who redefine what aging can look like.

Jack LeLanne, the godfather of bodybuilding, worked out for an hour and a half every day at age ninety-five. After that, he went for a half-hour swim. At 61, he entertained himself one fine afternoon by pulling 10 boats with 77 passengers for more than a mile. He swam in handcuffs and it took less than an hour. (Why handcuffs? Makes me wonder where his mind was.)

In a 2015 *Harper's Bazaar* edition, Sharon Stone's body at 58 made 20-year-olds weep with envy. Madonna is leaner in her fifties than she was in her twenties, because she spent her time adding muscle instead of losing it. Jack, Sharon, and Madonna made investments that reaped high returns. They are not the only ones. There are many other examples, not all of them A-listers.

The breakdown we associate with growing old begins at age 30. Don't put up with it. You can be old at age 35, or you can be in top shape in your eighties. Once, a woman in her mid-eighties told me she was going on a skiing trip—down-slope, not cross country. How you age is partially genetic, but a lot of it is choice. Nicholas A. DiNubile stated that a 60-year-old can outperform a 20-year-old, given the 60-year-old is well-conditioned and the 20-year-old is not.

Everyone who defies age by training their minds and bodies updates the collective belief system about how limited we should be at any given age. Be a role model for those who come after you by keeping up your strength.

Realistic Goals Equals Less Frustration

Being in the best shape of your life within three months is a realistic goal for those who have spent at least one diligent year at the gym, building a solid foundation of muscle mass. For everyone else, it's unrealistic and potentially harmful. Unrealistic expectations will leave you even more frustrated with your body.

When setting goals, remember that the body is your temple. Do you want to build a temple or a McMansion? A McMansion may be faster to build, but a temple lasts longer. If you were going to hire an architect for the job, you'd have to be specific about what kind of structure you want.

We don't build McMansions in this book. We build temples. When you get ready to build, you need to think like an architect.

Architects build in phases, one phase after another. In exercise science, these phases are called cycles. The first cycle for beginners or anyone returning to exercise after an extended leave of absence is building a strong foundation of full body muscle mass. Another component of building the foundation can be changing body composition.

Changing body composition is the action of decreasing body fat while increasing muscle mass. The two processes complement each other beautifully and happen naturally when you combine weight lifting and cardiovascular exercise. Against common belief, you don't need to lose weight before you build muscle. I hope you've stuck with me long enough to understand that increasing metabolism is a priority.

Building the foundation means exercising all nine major muscle groups equally. You'll prevent injury and pain by avoiding muscular imbalance, and you'll slow down the aging process.

A solid foundation is flexible. There could be an earthquake. The building needs to be able to bend for sudden shocks and shakes, which will surely happen eventually. Flexibility training must be part of any building and maintenance cycle.

After building a solid foundation, you can move on to beautifying your building. Think of it this way: It makes little sense to apply pretty stucco to the ceiling before the roof is finished.

How long should you work on your first cycle?

It depends on your personal goals and the time you're willing to dedicate. Three months minimum is a safe bet. Six months is average, and nine to twelve months is a good choice if you're starting past the age of 45 and want to minimize wear and tear on your musculoskeletal frame.

Let me explain what I mean by building McMansions. These are the exercise regimens that promise you'll be in the best shape of your life within three months. It's a great selling point for underemployed personal trainers, boot camps, magazines and the like, but the damage to the musculoskeletal frame is not worth the instant gratification. If you participate in such programs, you'll see changes but they will be temporary and flimsy. You won't have a solid structure because you'll have no foundation. A beginner will never have the same muscular definition after six to nine weeks of boot camp than someone who has spent a year building lean mass. A beginner attempting to exercise at the same intensity as an advanced fitness buff

will likely be working on future arthritis. Don't spend your time hurting yourself, no matter your reasoning.

Spend three to six months on building your foundation. You will feel better and more present in your body after your first workout, and your sense of well-being will increase with every session. There's no need to rush. Enjoy your body and experience the sensation of awakening muscle and increased circulation. Take pleasure in heightened physical awareness and your growing sensual expression. Don't rush just so you can look good for someone else at the expense of your temple.

In your advanced cycles, you can begin to sculpt. It's the beautifying process. You'll have enough lean muscle mass as material which you can sculpt, and you'll know how to emphasize muscle groups without doing harm.

Eventually, you'll like your architectural work of art, and you will enter the maintenance phase.

Time commitments need to be realistic and sustainable. If they are not, you'll put off getting started because you don't have time or you'll quit because it takes too much time.

For best results, work the entire body with weights three times per week. Rest 48 hours between weight lifting sessions. Weight lifting on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday is a standard example. If you can't bear the idea of going to the gym three times per week, try two times per week. You'll progress more slowly and changes will be less dramatic, but you'll still see a difference.

Always start with a five to 10 minute warm-up, and end with five to 10 minutes of stretching.

Work all nine major muscle groups three times per week. Perform three to four sets for each major muscle group.