



Listen to music and watch the miles disappear.

You Can Do It!

FEEL LIKE QUITTING? TRY THESE **NINE STRATEGIES** TO MAKE YOU STICK TO YOUR PROGRAM.

BY DANA ROBINSON

The urge to quit can be extremely seductive. It can call out to you in your sweatiest most exhausting moments and trick you into believing that life would truly be better (or at least easier) if you were to simply put down the hand weights, go home and eat a brownie. So how do you banish the urge to hop off the treadmill 20 minutes early or sneak out of that boot-camp class? The answers are a lot easier than you might think.

Pump Up the Jams

Pumped-up music is always a great way to *start* a workout, but music also wields the power to help you *finish* a workout. “I’ve always been motivated by movie scores,” says Bobby Kleinau, a personal trainer and nutritionist who relied on his workout music to help him lose 140 pounds. His soundtrack of choice: The score to the film *Rudy*. “Maybe I identified with the underdog and the

‘never say die’ mentality ... but it helped me push, pull, squat and lunge myself into the best shape of my life.”

1 To avoid playlist boredom, keep your music library updated. Check out the latest audio offerings from Spotify.com.

2 Set your playlist to “shuffle” instead of listening to the same songs in the same order. You just may stumble on a few of your favorite tunes that you completely forgot you had.

3 If the only thing you hate about your favorite workout DVD is the music, simply mute the TV and play your own workout soundtrack from your computer.

Give Yourself a Break

Improving your shape can only happen if you continually challenge your body. And along with change sometimes comes the “I can’t do it” attitude. If you’re a master of weight training and now feel uncoordinated and awkward in a yoga class, you may have to fight the urge to roll up your mat and walk away. But battling that impulse can be as simple as giving yourself a break and staying positive. In all likelihood, you’re not going to be the best student in Zumba class on your first day, nor will you easily and effortlessly complete that extra set of reps with an additional 10-pound weight. The key is to constantly remind yourself that you can do it and just push through to the end.

4 There’s no shame in taking a break if the new workout is a little too challenging at first. Give yourself permission to rest without guilt. After a short breather, you’ll most likely find yourself pumped up and ready to get back in the game.

5 When you’re in the middle of a difficult task and your mind switches to the “I can’t do it” channel, grab the mental remote and see what else is on. Repeat the mantra “I can do it” over and over again in your head to help push you through. You may be surprised by how much more you’re capable of doing.

6 Think of exercise as something that you *get* to do instead of something that you *have* to do. If you look at every crunch and every lift as a gift, your mental attitude will quickly become more positive.

Focus on the Goal

What’s more motivating than the idea of fitting into a smaller dress size or finishing your first marathon? “Keeping an eye on the end result is what motivates me to push through the frustrations and doubts,” says Monica Hargrove, a track star and Under Armour fitness model. Her weekly workouts involve a variety of activities, including weight training, medicine-ball routines, crunches and up to 30 miles of running. And while the temptation to quit is no doubt lurking around every corner, the thought of tackling upcoming competitions keeps

her going. “I know what I will accomplish if I persevere, and with that in mind, I simply cannot give in,” Hargrove says.

7 Select a visual cue, such as the picture of a finish line or that dream string bikini, that represents your goal and keep it in a prominent place.

8 Former NFL lineman Pete Koch, who has maintained a 60-pound weight loss, recommends logging your commitment to keep you focused on your goal. If you’re trying to lose weight, he suggests creating

a thorough list of reasons that weight loss will enhance your life. “This list not only serves as a powerful starting point for your weight-loss journey but a document that you can refer to when you need encouragement,” Koch says.

9 Create a movie reel in your mind that stars you achieving your goal. Play that movie as often as possible — during your daily commute, waiting in line at the supermarket, anytime your mind is idle. Visualizing your goal increases the likelihood that you’ll achieve it. ■

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