

Are you ready to stop making excuses?

When asked to write an article on the reasons why people don't exercise, I smugly thought to myself that this would be a walk in the park. I'd offered myself a million excuses over the past twenty years that I felt certain I already knew them all. I certainly had a million more reasons why "tomorrow" would be the defining moment that would set my fitness journey in motion and change my life forever. 7,300 tomorrows later, I am now only 4 months into that journey.

Ok, let's be serious. In order for my article to be reasonably accurate, I'd have to do some research. I began by interviewing people from all walks of life between the ages of 18-70 years. Next I sent my web browser into overdrive, reading any information on the issue I could get my hands on. I visited social sites, dieter's blogs, both health and government sites and many more I can't even remember now.

It turns out that these are the top 10 reasons we don't exercise regularly:

1. The overwhelming feeling of committing long term to regular exercise is exhausting in itself
2. Busy lifestyle; difficult to find time to exercise
3. Family commitments; I have small children etc.
4. Fear; being too embarrassed to go to a gym because we are self conscious of both our appearance and poor performance (*personally I feel this is a real issue, not an excuse, however this too can be overcome with the right assistance*)
5. Being young and healthy and not seeing the need for it or benefit; or being too old
6. When we stop exercising we lose the benefits anyway, so why start in the first place
7. Don't like to sweat or ruin my hairstyle (this one did make me laugh...)
8. Going to the gym is boring; running on a treadmill or riding an exercise bike, but going nowhere
9. Can't stay motivated about exercising and feel more tired and sore after exercising anyway
10. Monetary issue; gyms are too expensive

Hmmm..... any of these sound familiar?

I have to tell you, whilst typing this list, I did feel a little pathetic (*ok, maybe more than a little*) knowing I used several of these excuses on a regular basis for so long. What took me so long to get going? I feel I've wasted so many years, but it's better to be a late bloomer than to have never bloomed at all, especially when it comes to exercising and improving your health.

If you too are tired of making excuses, you can put money on the fact that your husband, wife, best friend and work mates are all tired of listening to them. Is this really how you want to go through the rest of your life? Wouldn't you rather:

- look in the mirror each day and love the body you see, instead of being envious of others
- feel fit and fabulous at any age
- have more energy to play with your children or just do the things you love
- be around long enough to see your children grow up and hopefully their children
- run that marathon you've always dreamt of, instead of admiring others from your couch
- take up that sport you've always wanted to, instead of critiquing the game from the side lines
- feel an improved sense of health and overall wellbeing
- have the confidence you gain through exercising and looking and feeling great

If you are reading this article and are tired of all your excuses and the later feelings sound like a much better option, become the hero in your story. Life can be average or it can be memorable. Start living the life you have always wanted. Life is way too short for regrets.

By Susan Williamson