BY CELIA BONINO

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How many of you made a New Year's resolution to get fit this year? How many of you have already given up on that goal?

If studies are correct, about half of you have quit your diet or exercise plan by now. We all start with good intentions and a "This time I'm gonna do it" attitude. So, what went wrong?

I have been an exercise physiologist at Eden Medical Center for five years. My job is to help people make long-term, healthy changes in their lives. I believe what makes the majority successful in getting fit and, more importantly, staying fit is that they found something in exercise that is valuable to them.

You don’t have to love exercising to keep fit for life, but you do have to value it enough to do it consistently.

Many of the participants I work with at EdenFit have very serious medical conditions — obesity, diabetes, heart disease, etc. The value that they have found in exercise is quite literally getting their lives back.

Sometimes it takes a health *scare* to motivate someone to take serious action. But I believe that everyone can find value and tremendous benefit from exercise, whether it’s more energy to do fun activities or gaining years of quality living.

Baby Steps

How do you find value in something you can’t stick to long enough to reap the benefits? My biggest mantra to my patients is to set small goals and appreciate each accomplishment, no matter how little.

Believe me, those achievements start to add up and the next thing you know, you are stronger, more energetic, sleeping better, moving better — without pain — and getting healthier.

Be Realistic and Specific

Goals such as “I’m going to lose weight” or “I’m going to eat better” are too vague. And ones such as “I’m going to run a marathon” are too lofty and may not be realistic for you.

Setting specific, achievable goals will also help turn your exercise plan into a healthy habit. Writing down your goals can help keep you on track.

Reaching long-term goals takes time. Start today and you’ll be that much closer to your goal and what is valuable to you.

EdenFit

EdenFit is Eden Medical Center's supervised exercise program located in San Leandro. We have been encouraging, motivating and educating people to find value in exercise and reach their goals since 2006. Come visit us and maybe, this year, you'll not only accomplish your New Year's resolution but turn it into a life-long commitment.