

Having It All. Sounds Good, Doesn't It?

It's almost a universal goal, but one that is rarely achieved. Why?

Two main reasons:

1. Not knowing what we want
2. Not planning for what we will want

With those two truths in place, failure is assured.

Avoid this common fate by taking time to assess where you are, what the differences are between this place and where you want to be, then extrapolating into the future to get ahead of the "changing desires" curve.

There are, of course, unforeseen changes we will all experience. If your air supply is suddenly cut off, getting approved for a mortgage takes a back seat rather quickly. Being flexible will come in handy, but that is no reason not to have a plan.

What I'm about to say may strike you as ridiculous, weak, or even revolting. If so, then please keep reading. Shelve your anger and keep an open mind. Your future self will thank us both.

There's More to Life Than Your Deadlift PR

As a lifelong active person (and "exerciser" for the past 22 years) I have chased my fair share of performance milestones. None of them ever changed my life the way I hoped (believed?) they would.

I know people who hold world records, national records, and so on. The same goes for them. They put the bar down after that lift and they are still the same person they were before. Same problems, same house, same car, same list of other things they haven't done yet that won't really change anything for them either.

Not that goals are pointless. Goals are fine and, for a few and in certain circumstances, required, but they are always transient. When your needs change, which they will, your goals change. Having a vision, on the other hand, can keep you on track for a lifetime.

Life is a string of events. The density and frequency of events you deem "positive" in that string is going to determine how satisfied you are with your life. Goal setting stretches out

the distance between the high points, leaving you feeling like you always want something more, that you are never satisfied. Vision allows you to enjoy the journey.

You're Not Impressing Anyone

As I get older (and hopefully wiser), my perspective on life and training has expanded to include much more than "right now." I've adjusted my training toward longevity and away from **aesthetics**, "performance" (whatever that means), or impressing anyone, myself included.

Please don't take this the wrong way. I am not saying that you are training incorrectly, that you shouldn't do what you love doing, or that going hard is a bad idea. I am far from proposing that you go easy all the time.

I am bringing up the idea that training for the moment should be balanced with training for the future, for health and longevity, that both short- and long-term goals deserve consideration. *And, by the way, no one cares what you can lift.*

Training for Health

What does training for health look like, and how does it differ from going to the gym three to five times a week for an hour?

If you've been following along for the last eight weeks, you already know **how bad a desk job is for your health** and **how little an hour of working out does to alleviate that harm**.

The desk workouts are the answer to that problem. They get you moving consistently throughout the day and combat that health degradation.

Any training you do for performance is up to you, and encouraged as long as you remain uninjured. **Add in this training program if you work a sedentary job, drive everywhere, or otherwise spend lots of time sitting but still want a long, healthy life.**

Weeks 9-12: Adding in Strength Work

The key to countering the negative effects of long intervals of sitting is simple – **shorten those intervals**. To accomplish this while also getting stronger, we're taking the "greasing the groove" technique to work with us.

Choose three to five movements that require little or no equipment. **Each minute for three to five minutes** do a set of one of the exercises you chose, stopping well short of failure. **Use absolutely perfect form.** Stop before your form is compromised.

Once your set is done, walk or stretch for the remainder of the minute. Then, move on to the next exercise on your list. Do this once each hour that you spend sitting.

While most offices would disapprove of bringing a barbell to work, there are numerous strength training tools that are easy to stow under your desk, in a closet, or in the corner. My favorites are kettlebells and sandbags, but club bells, bands, medicine balls, and dumbbells are some other fine options.

Many offices contain items that can be used to create resistance, even variable resistance.

Water bottles:

- Bear hug squats
- Bent over rows
- Suitcase deadlifts
- Single leg deadlifts
- Shouldering
- Overhead press
- Farmer's carry

Reams or cases of printer paper:

- Bear hug squats
- Two arm bent over row
- Twisting reverse lunge to high pull
- Twisting reverse lunge to press (start with the resistance in the racked position)
- Lumbar carry
- Shouldered squats

I'm sure you get the idea. Neither the list of objects nor the list of exercises is exhaustive. Use your imagination.

In case none of the above are possible, you still have an incredible training tool with you all the time – your own bodyweight. There are so many fantastic movements you can do to strengthen and mobilize with no equipment at all.

Some of the basics:

- Squats

- Lunges
- Jumps
- Running
- Push ups
- Crawls
- Backbends and bridges
- Supermans
- V ups
- Kneeling and half-kneeling

For the next four weeks of this twelve week cycle of desk workouts, your assignment is to do at least four rounds as described above. Start as slowly as you need to, perhaps with three easier exercises with light loading.

Each day or week, as possible based on how your body feels, add another exercise (and therefore another minute of work each round), a little more weight, or even a rep or two to the exercises you've been doing.

It might look like this:

Monday

1. Push ups, 9 reps, round out the minute with walking and upper body stretches
2. Body weight squats, 27 reps, round out the minute (not much time!) with forearm stretches
3. One arm kettlebell rows, 20kg, 7 reps per arm, round out the minute with walking and gentle neck stretches

Tuesday

1. Two handed crush grip overhead press, 20kg kettlebell, 11 reps, round out the minute with chest opening stretches
2. Reverse lunges, 15 reps per leg (used the entire minute)
3. Walk for one minute

Wednesday

1. Band resisted seated rows, 12 reps, round out the minute moving from plank to down facing dog
2. Push ups, 11 reps, round out the minute with walking and upper body stretches
3. Body weight squats, 30 reps, round out the minute with a standing forward fold

Thursday

1. Feeling sore and stiff, walking for 5 minutes each hour is fine for today. Include some stretching from phase 1 while walking.

Friday

1. Two handed crush grip overhead press, 20kg kettlebell, 13 reps, round out the minute with chest opening stretches
2. Weighted reverse lunges, 15 reps per leg (used the entire minute)
3. One arm kettlebell rows, 20kg, 9 reps per arm, round out the minute with walking and gentle neck stretches

Saturday and Sunday: Keep active! Instead of sitting watching TV all weekend, use the time to move and enjoy your super functional, healthy body.

The following week, try adding another exercise to one or two of the days. Take a rest when you need it, and stop adding weight, reps, or exercises when you consistently take rest days.

Shoot for four days of exercise and one walking-only day per week. If you go too light, use your rest day to do a little extra, If you go too hard, take an extra rest (walking) day.

Keeping a journal is very important in this process, especially at the beginning while you figure out the optimal intensity, volume, frequency, and progression for your body.

If this is your first exposure to the desk workouts, check out the first eight weeks:

- [Desk Workouts: Cycle 1, Weeks 1-4 – Habituation](#)
- [Desk Workouts: Cycle 1, Weeks 5-8 – Intensification](#)