

How I Trick Myself into Liking Exercise (when All I Want to do is Get more Pie).

by Meg Worden



I've always hated exercise. If I had my way I would spend my days eating pie, drinking gin, smoking Camel cigarettes, and delegating. Mmmm. *Pie*. (Sends pie person out for more pie by blowing smoke rings in the general direction of pie store.)

Lord knows I've tried. I mean, minus the personal pie person (job opening alert!), there have been multiple attempts to subsist on tobacco, juniper, meringue, and a heaping slice of complacency. And every single time that ended in tears. And by "tears" I mean "suicidal ideation."

I have to do the exercise or I atrophy. It's just the facts. And who has time for atrophy?

So, as I see it, here are my options:

1. Do healthy things that I despise and be miserable, eventually turning into a hateful mall-walker, wearing orthopedics, reeking of scented candles and sweatshop. OR
2. Learn to like stuff.

Turns out, a life where I feel energetic, loving, engaged, flexible, and full of good ideas has to include sobriety, clarity, fresh air, and circulation. And I'm going to have to like it. But how do I learn to *like* stuff? Is that even possible?

The short answer is “yep”.

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But they both mean the same thing—*it's possible*.

Here's a way:

First, by adjusting expectations and honoring your limitations. For example: Consistency doesn't have to mean doing the same thing every day. It can mean doing something mostly every day forever. There are times that I'm running miles and really can't wait to get to studio classes, and then there are days (ahem, *weeks*) where I write, or Netflix, or emote all day. During those times I might run short laps around the park, do a few pushups, maybe a plank. 10 minutes of yoga or Barre 3 at home from my computer in my pajamas. Just something. Sometimes the goal is: Bring it like Beckham. Sometimes the goal is: Don't start smoking again.

One time many years ago, a psychologist said to me, “Meg, we are going to have to find some place for you *in between* suicide and the Pulitzer Prize.”
(*mumblecough*)

Second, expand your goals. Consider the why that's beyond just trying to just maintain or lose weight. I exercise to be a strong enough container to carry all of me *and* have room for those I love. *Less cunty in general!* That kind of thing.

When I run, I like to imagine that I'm really practicing staying upright on a rapidly spinning planet. I like to thank the trees for their underground root system, and for making oxygen and so forth. I like to think that scores me points with support that I don't have to manufacture. Haters back right up when forest got your back. Try it. At the very least, it reminds me to look at the trees and that helps me remember my problems aren't really so unique, or interesting, or even all that problematic after all. Which makes it all worthwhile.

Eventually, the exercise starts to create a need for itself. It will become something you look forward to, something you crave, something you recognize you need in a non-negotiable way to be on the spectrum between sane and amazing.

So, how bout you go walk around the block? Take a 10 minute run, do a Down Dog or some pushups. *Now*. And then take it from there.