

Top 5 Fitness Facts You Didn't Learn in High School

(Or College, for That Matter)

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It's probably been a long time since you sat in a classroom thinking about the future. Life moves quickly—and the world of health and fitness has changed dramatically along the way.

After more than four decades working as a fitness professional, I've learned that some of the most important lessons about health were never taught in school. Here are five insights that often challenge common beliefs about exercise and wellbeing.

5. Your Scale Lies

Your bathroom scale reports a number every time you step on it—but what does it really say?

Body weight fluctuates constantly based on hydration, digestion, sleep, stress, and time of day. The scale cannot distinguish between muscle, fat, bone, and water, yet many people treat that single number as the ultimate measure of health.

True health is reflected in energy, strength, mobility, sleep quality, and overall wellbeing—not just the number on the scale.

4. Pain, Punishment... or Play?

Many adults know exercise is important but struggle to fit it into busy lives. As children, movement happened naturally—bike rides, recess, walking to school, or simply playing outside.

Today, screens and sedentary routines have replaced much of that daily movement. Exercise can start to feel like punishment instead of something enjoyable.

The solution is often simple: rediscover movement that feels like play. Hiking, swimming, dancing, or walking outdoors can reconnect you with the natural joy of being active. I find that gyms aren't my clients favorite places to exercise!

3. You Can Feel Younger Next Year

In their book **Younger Next Year**, physician Henry S. Lodge, MD and his patient Chris Crowley describe how consistent exercise dramatically improves how we age.

Regular aerobic activity supports heart health, while strength training preserves muscle, balance, and independence. Research consistently shows exercise improves mood, confidence, sleep, and resilience while lowering risk for chronic disease.

How you move today strongly influences how you feel tomorrow, no matter the age on your Driver's License!

2. Health and Fitness Are Business Relevant

Health doesn't only affect individuals, it impacts workplaces as well.

Preventable illness contributes to rising healthcare costs, absenteeism, and reduced productivity. Research over the past two decades shows that comprehensive wellness initiatives can reduce medical costs, lower absenteeism, and improve employee engagement and performance. Healthy employees bring more energy, focus, and resilience to their work.

On the individual level, most senior leaders KNOW that being fit allows them to perform at their highest level- which is what you want for your career as well, right?

1. Sitting May Be Shortening Your Life

Consider a typical day: driving, meetings, computer work, dinner, television, and sleep. Many adults spend more than nine hours each day sitting.

Excessive sitting has been associated with increased risk of cardiovascular disease, obesity, diabetes, and other chronic conditions.

Small changes can make a big difference: stand more often, take walking breaks, hold walking meetings, and look for opportunities to move throughout the day.

Movement creates energy. Energy builds momentum. And momentum supports a healthier life.

About the Author

Linda T. Gottlieb, MA, CPT, CET is a fitness and behavior-change coach with more than four decades of experience helping adults build strength, mobility, and confidence through sustainable exercise.

Through her company FitTraining, she provides personalized coaching designed to support healthy aging, recovery, and long-term physical independence.

Linda has worked with the Yale University School of Public Health Exercise & Cancer research team supporting clinical trials studying physical activity in cancer survivorship. She is the author of *No Ifs, Ands or Butts: How to Turn the Top 10 Exercise Excuses into Fitness Triumphs*.

Her philosophy is simple: Getting older doesn't have to suck. Move your body, improve your life.

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