The Magic Pill

*Lifestyle secrets from a Personal Trainer*

By Jeff McMahon

Fall 2014
Preface: Hello everyone! I am Jeff McMahon and I appreciate you reading my book about lifestyle and healthy living. A little history about me before we get started, and then we can dive into the good stuff. My degree is in Business Entrepreneurship with a double minor in Pre-Med/Pre-Pharm. I am dual certified in Exercise Science, Sports Medicine, and a lifestyle and wellness coach. I have been training for almost a decade now and have worked with well over 500 clients. My specialties are body transformation, sports specific training, injury rehab, massage therapy, running/triathlons, and counseling. I have helped people lose over 100 pounds, down to 5 pounds, to total knee replacement rehab, to cancer patients. I have never given up on anyone yet and I'm not going to start with you! Please enjoy the material in this book, I hope it helps guide you down the right path on your journey to a healthy life.
Guidelines to a simple & healthy life

Everyone has a different way of living their life. No one way is better than the other. You can be a vegetarian, vegan, paleo, bulletproof, or carnivore. Whatever you choose, there is one philosophy that always wins out - you want to live your life in the majority. Think about it like this… there are 7 days in a week, and out of those 7 days you work on average 5 days; if not more. To get your job done every week you have to work roughly 8 hours a day, 5 days a week. If you have to work that hard to support your family, you have to take that mentality to your nutrition/lifestyle. Out of the 7 days in a week, you should/need to eat healthy at least 5 of those days. If you want to change/transform your figure, you need to workout at least 4 if not 5 of those days. The bigger the effort you put into your lifestyle, the more rewards you get out of it. My go-to strategy for nutrition is that I work Monday through Friday, so I have roughly the same meals throughout my work week. This allows me to splurge on the weekend "a little bit" with the kids and not feel badly about it. I stress "a little bit" because even on cheat days I don't eat badly for the entire day. I will have a bad meal, or a bad meal and a snack depending on the day, but that's it. It completely defeats the purpose of working out if you are going to destroy it with your bad eating habits. Stop thinking of food as something that you crave. Instead think of it as the fuel to give you the body that you've always wanted. That want has to be stronger than your cravings, or you will never get there.

Use this same strategy with your workout routine. When I first became a personal trainer, I was the tallest [6'2"] but the skinniest trainer [173lbs] on my staff. When I wanted to bulk up and transform my body, I worked out an hour a day, 6 days a week, for a little over a year. In that year I went from 173 pounds to 188 pounds. With this change in my body, I felt the most confident I have ever felt in my entire life. It was such a dramatic feeling to see myself in the mirror and see my new and improved muscles. But the thing to take away from this is not the glamour and the muscles, but that it took me OVER A YEAR working out 6 DAYS A WEEK to get these results. I have a high metabolism so it's hard for me to gain weight, but I had an end goal in mind that motivated me to stay on course, and that hunger to see the new and improved me. Nothing happens overnight and that is why so many
people fail to reach their goal. They think their body will change immediately just because they started working out. You have to take a step back and remember that you spent many years getting your body overweight and out of shape, so it's going to take time to see a major difference...at least one that will stay. We can all lose 10 pounds in two weeks, fad diets have proved that time and time again. To keep that weight off for good though is a lifetime goal. Learn to be patient with yourself and give your body the chance to succeed.

This book is called the magic pill because the real magic pill is knowledge, persistence, and execution ... plain and simple. Knowledge gives you the ability to use the right strategy, the proper techniques, and the safety to avoid injuries while you are on this journey. Persistence picks you up when you fall down. It tells you to stop making excuses why you should quit and keeps you focused on your goal. Execution is arguably the most important because without actually doing the work, you will ALWAYS just be dreaming. Stop dreaming and start doing, that’s the only way to succeed!

Of course there are a million commercials for actual pills that you can buy to eliminate your fat, but if you read the fine print you'll quickly realize they are too good to be true. Of these too-good-to-be-true pills out there, the most common one in the fitness community are fat burner pills. Fat burner pills, which are mostly thermogenic devices loaded with caffeine to heat up your body and make you shaky, are nothing more than a sales gimmick. Here is how they work - the theory is that the warmer your body is, then you will sweat out your weight. This works, except once you drink water again you will gain back whatever weight you lost. In essence you are spinning your wheels and wasting your money (but of course the commercials won't ever tell you that). The other common pills that people take are testosterone pills. These over the counter pills increase your testosterone production and in theory help build more muscle. What they don't tell you is that your body already has a predetermined percentage of testosterone and estrogen that it produces to keep you at equilibrium. So in order to change this predetermined percentage, you also have to take a supplement blocker so your body doesn't pass the pill through you in your urine to keep its balance in check.
I put vitamins and multi-vitamins in this same unnecessary column. If you take a multi-vitamin on an empty stomach in the morning, then your body can't process it and break it down to be absorbed into your body. Instead it will hit your stomach and then pass right through your body. This is why it's important to eat healthy fruits and vegetables to get your vitamins and minerals and not try to take them through a manufactured pill. Your body knows how to process fruit and vegetables and that's why you should always eat your healthy servings of them everyday. On the other hand if the doctor tells you to take iron, or vitamin D, or something that you are deficient in, that is a different story. But to think that you just have to take a multivitamin and you will be good-to-go is far from the truth.
Everyone has a busy and stressful life, that's the American way. We work many hours throughout the week, we have a million things going on with the kids, so we get too busy to take care of ourselves. After 20 years of this, you are now in your 40's/50's, you are out of breath going up the stairs, and are diabetic with high cholesterol/blood pressure and have a high BMI [body mass index]. Out of the 7 days in a week, you most likely eat out at least 5 of those; the majority rule also applies to your negative lifestyle. All this will lead to a shorter life span and a lesser quality of life. Why not change it around in just a few simple steps and start living a life that you can look forward to?

Step 1: IT'S A LIFESTYLE, NOT A DIET
The first thing I do when I meet with a new client to go over their goals is to see how they want their body to be. Personal training is a lot like being a hairstylist. People know how they want their hair to look, but don't have the knowledge or ability to cut their own hair. Most people know how they want their body to look but don't have the knowledge and tools to get them to where they want to be. The first thing we go over is nutrition. Roughly 80% of how you look is your nutrition, and roughly 20% of how you look is your physical activity. Eating healthy is the big part, working out is the small part. Never get that confused. You can NEVER “out workout” your eating habits. The key to success is to change your mindset and radically hone in your eating so you are either losing weight or gaining weight, whichever your goal may be. I don't like to use the word "diet" because it is such a short-term word. When people think of diet, they think that they only have to do it for a short period of time and then they can go back to their old habits. This is the biggest challenge with my clients. The media has all these 10 day cleanses, or 21 day diets, and all the other fad gimmicks out there. If you don't change your lifestyle and your eating habits, then you might as well quit right now. Nothing is going to permanently change until you do. I will explain to you how your body works and the system that I use everyday to make me have the body I want and to allow me to maintain it year after year.
Step 2: UNDERSTANDING HOW YOUR BODY WORKS
Think of your stomach as a big bonfire. In order for the bonfire to thrive and burn high it needs have fuel added to it. As the fire burns down you need to add more fuel. This is a great example of how you should view food and how your stomach works. If you are trying to lose weight and decide you are going to starve yourself, or just eat 1 meal a day, then your body won't know when it is going to get its next meal. This tells your body to store food as fat because fat is our body's long term energy source. It thinks every little bit you put in there is all that it’s getting and so it holds onto it for as long as it can. This is called starvation mode and is a terrible strategy if you are trying to lose weight.

Instead, what you need to do is eat smaller meals throughout the day. This will keep that "fire going”. Your body gets used to having food in it and it knows to push out your unwanted food to make room for your next meal. By routinely eating small meals throughout the day, my body knows to go to the bathroom and flush out the toxins, knowing that it will be getting more food again in the next 2-3 hours. You want to eat to feel satisfied but never full. This will help keep your blood sugar and insulin regulated instead of spiking it up and down with 3 big meals [breakfast, lunch, dinner] resulting in diabetes [the silent killer] and many other chronic issues.

When your body is accustomed to this lifestyle, you will become more regular as well. You want your body to flush out all that unwanted gunk that builds up, otherwise the bad bacteria will spread and could cause other health issues for you down the road. Ideally you want to go to the bathroom for a #2 between 1-3 times per day. Excessive visits to the bathroom (more than 5 times per day) is not good either because you can become very dehydrated and your organs need water to function properly. If you are not going on a regular basis then I would check with a doctor or nutritionist and see what you need to do to get that fixed. But to lose weight you have to excrete it.

Step 3: FOOD TYPES AND HOW THEY WORK
We have all heard of the words protein, carbohydrates, and fat. You need all three of these in your eating plan to have a healthy and sustained life. Protein is essential for building muscles and keeping your body firm and strong. Fat is essential for
long term energy source [kind of like a 401K], and carbohydrates are essential for energy production. Each of these play a major role but you need to understand them first to utilize them at their full potential.

Protein is the building block for your muscles. You have muscle and you have fat in your body. If you want to be lean and trim down or become big and bulky, you need to eat protein to feed your muscles and burn fat. You should have protein in every meal throughout the day. In order for your body to utilize the energy from carbohydrates and not store the carbs as fat, you have to eat protein with it. You especially want to have protein within 30 minutes of finishing a workout to replenish your body after tearing your muscle fibers down in the workout. Good after workout ideas are protein shake, apple with peanut butter, peanut butter and jelly sandwich, or nuts and yogurt. Some examples of good protein for your meals throughout the day are eggs, yogurt, protein shakes, lean chicken, lean beef, turkey meat, lean pork-chops, fish, and nuts.

Carbohydrates are good for you and you need carbs in your diet [contrary to what the media shoves down our throats]. You want to eat carbs with breakfast and lunch because carbs help jumpstart your metabolism and provide you with energy throughout the day. It's when you get home at night and eat dinner that you want to stop eating carbs. Typically I tell clients not to eat carbs after 3pm. Think of it like this: you get home and eat dinner and then most likely you will sit with the family, watch tv, relax, basically not be very mobile/active. If you eat a dinner packed with carbs and don't utilize those carbs as an energy source, your body will turn the carbs into fat [long term energy source] and that's how you get your belly/love handles. Healthy carbs to focus on for your breakfast and lunch would be brown rice, oatmeal, and sweet potato. Yes I know that there are only 3 items on this list, but read the book "Wheat Belly" by William Davis and you will understand the issues with wheat these days. Until you get your body where you want it to be, I suggest sticking with these 3. On the other hand, if you are trying to gain weight, then you would want to increase your carbs and even eat them with your dinner.

Fats are good for you. All the fat free stuff you see out there in grocery stores have the fat taken out of the product and replaced with sugar of some kind. Scientists now believe that sugar is the pre-cursor to cancer because of the...
inflammation attributes it has on our cells and the way that it genetically mutates those cells. Trans fats and saturated fats are bad because they increase your risk for heart disease and cholesterol. Good fats though do just the opposite. Here are some healthy fats that you should incorporate into your eating plan - avocados, olive oil, nuts, nut butter [try to choose natural to limit the sugar], and olives.

Fruits and vegetables should be the staple in everyone's nutritional plan. Ideally you would want to have fruits for breakfast and lunch and veggies for lunch and dinner. Fruits have natural sugar in them which will turn to fat if you do not use it for energy, so stay away from them at night. My favorite fruit to have in my eating plan are berries because of their antioxidant qualities [raspberries, strawberries, blueberries], apples, and citrus fruit [oranges, grapefruit, lemon] for their help in the prevention of artherosclerosis. Typically I will put a fresh lemon slice in my morning water. The lemon will help speed up your metabolism by helping your liver flush out the toxins that your body produces while you are sleeping. Remember, the better jump you get in the morning with your metabolism, the more fat you will burn throughout the day. After my morning water with lemon I will usually have fruit in my mid morning snack. My favorite is an orange or an apple.

Vegetables are the key to your success because they are the key to burning fat and losing weight WHILE YOU SLEEP! This is the best time for your body to burn fat, and so you want to aid that process as much as possible. Veggies that you want to focus on are kale, spinach, green beans, broccoli, asparagus, peppers, zucchini, cucumber, and cauliflower. Not everyone likes veggies and I get that. Bottom line is you want to wrap your head around the fact that veggies will keep your tummy flat and your organs happy and healthy. SO EAT YOUR VEGGIES!!

Lastly I want to quickly discuss sugar. Natural sugar, like fat, is good for you to some extent. Your body knows what to do with it and can process it accordingly. It’s when you start eating things with high fructose corn syrup, aspartame, Splenda, etc. that your body starts to react differently. All of those things are manufactured, which means mother earth did not provide us with these sweeteners. Because of this our body doesn't know how to process it and so it spikes up our insulin, slows down our metabolism, and mutates our cells. Just because we don't have enough historical evidence to prove the damage it does to our bodies is the only reason why
it is still available to the public. I pray that in another 10 years that all of it will be wiped from the stores and we have safe and healthy alternatives for the consumers.

Step 4: LIVE OUT OF TUPPERWARE
People lead busy lives. I have a busy life being a personal trainer and owning my own business. My entire day is centered around other people's schedules. This forces me to be very flexible with my time to accommodate when others are available for a session. My secret to my busy schedule is that I prepare my meals either the night before or that morning and package it in tupperware for my day. This does require me to wake up a bit earlier to get ready for my day, but I have a morning routine that I stick to. Let me walk you through a typical morning with me:

• Wake up 1 hour and 20 minutes before I have to leave for work
• Reflect, breathing routine, visualize my day, and write down my goals
• Shower and get dressed
• Feed the kids and get them ready and eat my own breakfast [typically oatmeal, eggs, and water; or bagel with bacon; or cereal if I'm in a rush]
• Take out leftovers from dinner to eat for my lunch [in tupperware]
• Make 2 wraps for my other 2 meals at work [High fiber, low carb wraps - one is a lunch meat wrap with slice of mozzarella cheese, the other is a peanut butter and jelly wrap]
• Pack up my bag with 2 pieces of fruit, water bottle, protein shake, and some kind of nutritious bar or some nuts
• Brush my teeth, get the kids on the bus, then drive to work

To me, eating healthy is a priority so I make time for it and build it into my schedule. This morning routine eliminates any excuses for not eating healthy. The tupperware [or glassware] makes it easy and convenient to heat up and eat at work. The smaller meals make it easy to walk and eat and don't take up much time at all out of my day or away from my clients. No matter how busy you are at work, you can't tell me that your boss is going to have an issue with you eating a healthy snack
at your desk to improve your health. Most likely your boss will ask you about your diet, which you will correct and tell them it’s your lifestyle not a diet, and maybe make changes in his/her life as well.

CALORIES: HOW MANY OR HOW FEW?
Losing weight is all about the math. Once you do the math, you will gain or lose weight [whichever your goal is]. It takes 3,500 calories to gain or lose one pound of bodyweight. [http://authoritynutrition.com/how-many-calories-per-day/](http://authoritynutrition.com/how-many-calories-per-day/)
Here is a good website to use to type in your body numbers and have it tell you how many calories you need to maintain your weight or lose weight. If you want to gain weight, then just eat more than your maintenance number. Your body is going to burn calories on its own, this is called your basal metabolic rate [BMR]. When you add exercise to your routine you will be burning more calories, so all you have left to do is eat less calories than you are burning and you will be dropping weight in no time! It is and will always be about the math!
CARDIO: THE BASICS

One thing to understand about cardio is that it is good for your heart, but is not the fastest way for you to lose weight. The reason you want to do cardio is to increase the strength of your heart so it pumps blood and oxygen more efficiently to your body. If your goal is to lose weight and all you plan on doing is hitting the treadmill/elliptical, or running outside, understand this prime formula. Resistance training burns calories for 16-48 hours after you are done working out. Doing strictly cardio burns calories for 2-3 hours after you are done. You will have to work 6-12x harder doing cardio than resistance training when it comes to burning calories and losing weight. That's why I incorporate "cardio" full body routines into my workouts for my clients trying to lose weight. This way they get the 16-48 hours of calorie burn while strengthening their heart in the process. It's a win win for everyone.

CARDIO: RUNNING

If you are a new runner or cardio enthusiast, here are some guidelines to follow to maximize your effort with minimal injuries. Before you start your exercise you want to do a warm-up. This warm-up should be a dynamic warm-up, meaning you go through a full range of motion to loosen up the muscles that you are going to be using throughout your run. Examples of this would be to walk lifting knees up as high as you can, walking and kicking your leg straight out like you are marching, and lunging side to side to loosen up the outside of your hips. You can YouTube or Google other ideas, but I hope this helps you get the gist of it. You are now off on your run. Running is broken down into 3 areas; breathing, stride length, and time/distance.

Breathing is arguably the most important piece of the pie when it comes to running. If you are not breathing properly then you will fatigue quickly, build up lactic acid and start getting that cramping feeling on your side. Your muscles need oxygen to perform an activity. When you are depriving your muscles of the needed oxygen and still asking them to perform, your body produces lactic acid to offset the CO2 you are producing. The lactic acid build up is your body telling you that you are pushing it beyond its normal limits. To help alleviate this problem, a tactic I like to use is to breathe in and out through your nose. Your nose concentrates the
oxygen in your blood helping maximize your muscles to perform for an extended period of time. Others will tell you to breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth, it's up to you which method you use. Either way, you want to control your breathing as much as possible to increase your endurance capabilities.

Stride length is the next piece of the puzzle and it is different for everyone. There is not a specific formula to use on this, but more what feels most comfortable to allow you to run a certain distance. The longer you can extend your stride, the more distance you can cover with each step. This will increase your speed because you are getting to your target distance that much quicker. But remember the longer your stride, the more energy you are exerting, which will fatigue you quicker. A good way to think about increasing your stride length is to look at the way you are running, and then look at the way an elite marathon runner runs. Usually their feet are kicking up to their butt as their normal stride, which allows them to go faster and run 26.1 miles in a 2 hour timeframe. In order to change your gait to be more like them is something that you have to build up over time. But with patience and persistence your body will adapt accordingly and it will become more natural for you. A way to help your body adapt your stride length is to do interval runs. Start with a normal jogging pace (one where you can comfortably hold a conversation with someone) for about 3 minutes and then increase your stride length for the next 2 minutes. Repeat this process for the duration of your run. Every week I want you to increase your time that you are lengthening your stride so your brain can maximize oxygen uptake during that time and allow you to run without building up that lactic acid that we talked about. This will drastically drop your running times and you will see yourself flying by the competition.

Time/distance for running is the last stage in the gambit. If you are running for a goal [5K, 10K, Half/Full marathon] then you know what distance you have to train for. I do not recommend just hopping off of the couch and run a half marathon, you have to build your body up to something like that. You always want to take a gradual approach so your body adjusts properly. If you are a complete newbie then look up running schedules for whatever distance your goal is. These schedules will help you plan out your distances and get you ready for the big race. Most training programs will take roughly 3 months, depending on your physical abilities, to get you off the couch and finishing a race. In the beginning you don’t
want to worry about time, you want to worry about finishing the distance. Once you are comfortable with the distance then you can start increasing your speed so you can hit your personal records [PR’s]. It’s always fun to finish a race and see where you placed amongst the other runners in your age group. This fuels that competitive side that we all have. Then race after race you will get better and better and truly see where your body can take you.

Cooling down after you run is as important as the warmup. When you run, you are putting a lot of strain on your glutes [butt muscles] to stabilize you as you plant one foot and then the other foot. Since you always are running in a forward motion, this can cause muscle imbalances. Those imbalances start causing IT band issues, sciatic nerve issues, and plantar fasciitis. To avoid these injuries and the pain they cause you want to do static [stationary hold] stretches. You want to stretch out your hamstrings, calves, quadriceps, adductors, hip flexors, and lower back as your priority target zones. YouTube will have a plethora of videos to show you how to stretch each area properly, and you want to hold each stretch for a good 20-30 seconds. This will allow the tension to release in your joints and ligaments to minimize injuries as your running progresses. As you become more advanced with your training, read more about myofascial release [foam rolling], which will allow you to self massage target areas on your body and alleviate muscle tensions and pain triggers.

CARDIO: ROWING

If anyone has seen the movie 300, they will know those actors were Hollywood’s hottest 300 guys in film. The cardio they had them do to stay ripped and defined was the row machine. Rowing is great because it forces you to utilize your entire body for whatever period of time you are exercising. You generate force through your legs [which are your biggest muscles and burn the most calories], then transfer that energy to your core as you push back and keep your body upright. Finally the energy follows through to your arms/back to squeeze your back muscles and get your full range of motion. As you can see, everything but your chest is used in this one movement. The best strategy to do while utilizing
rowing is to thrust with your legs, and follow through with your back. That will maximize your form and give you the most bang for your buck in terms of burning calories. With rowing, if you want to lose weight, then you do short distances with high intensity/power, and long distances with medium power to increase your endurance. When I'm looking to lean out and get more defined muscles I will row for 500m [about 3 minutes] and then hop off and do pushups, squats, abs, and barbell/dumbbell exercise. Then I hop back on and repeat. Try it out some time and see what you like. You can change the distance if you want to change the routine, but the combination of weights and cardio makes it a dynamic duo for weight loss and muscle definition.

CARDIO: STAIRMASTER
Stairs are a very tricky piece of cardio equipment. When done right they can be very effective for strengthening the leg muscles and your heart. When done wrong they can be very tough on your knees, back, and hips. The proper way to use a stair climber is to make sure that every step you take is having a flat foot step onto the step so that your heel is making contact with each step. This will alleviate the pressure on your knees to help avoid injury. Secondly, you want to make sure that you do not lean excessively forward on the machine. When you lean forward you put tension on your hips and lower back. This tension opens up your spine and leaves it unable to keep tension on your lower back. Without proper tension on your lower back, your body is unable to stabilize your core and spine allowing a slipped disc, or even worse a herniated disc. It is better to keep your shoulders back and your body upright; this will force you to engage your core to keep your balance and allow proper spine alignment for the motion of the exercise.

To maximize your workout on the stairmaster you need to focus on intensity and speed. This exercise is very leg dominated so you want to do a proper warmup beforehand [read running section] to avoid injury. A routine I like to do when training people with this piece of equipment is to do 2-3 minutes on the stairs, then hop off and do some plyometrics [jumping jacks, split squats, feet shuffle, jump rope] and an upper body exercise. When you get back on the stairs increase the
intensity and speed so it gets more difficult as you get more tired. This will increase the amount of oxygen that you consume and CO₂ that you produce. Thus you will burn more fat and expend more calories doing this workout.

CARDIO: SWIMMING

If you want a total body workout that can't be compromised, then swimming is your choice. It is the best exercise to do with the least amount of impact on your body. Everything from your legs, to core, to back, to arms, to chest is used when swimming. This is also the reason why it is a very difficult exercise to perform well because it requires so much energy to sustain your rhythm. If you are doing a swimming workout, then you do not want to do anything before hand. You want to do swimming all by itself or before you do a weight resistance routine. This will allow you to perfect your form and conserve your energy while swimming.

Swimming is great if you need to increase your range of motion in your shoulders, if you have back and joint pain, or if you are training for a duathlon/triathlon. It increases your lung capacity, it leans out your muscles, and burns a lot of calories. Like the other cardio options, swimming is great but intensity defines your output. The more intense your swims are, the faster you go, and the more calories you burn. For instance - if you are a 200 pound person swimming freestyle for an hour, you will burn 930 calories swimming fast, and 650 calories swimming slow. If you are a 130 pound person swimming for an hour you will burn 590 calories swimming fast and 413 calories swimming slow. As you can see, the intensity and your size varies the output that you get while swimming.

There are different swimming strokes for different focuses that you are trying to target as your goal. Freestyle is the most common stroke that swimmers utilize, but the back stroke is great for your shoulder definition, and breast stroke is great for your chest and back definition. Switching it up will give you a more rounded workout, but if you are training for something specific, freestyle is the most common form used. Please utilize a coach if you are not a good swimmer. If you are ill prepared for a race and are not a good swimmer, you increase the risk of cramping up in the middle of the water or you increase the chance of drowning by fatigue and exhaustion.
WEIGHT LIFTING: RESISTANCE TRAINING

Nutrition is still your #1 way to lose weight. Working out though is quintessential to transforming your body and toning yourself up as you are losing weight. Cardio is great for your heart but will take forever for you to see drastic changes in your body. To tone your muscles and give you a new and improved body, you need to add resistance training to your routine. Remember earlier in this book that we spoke about it taking me a year to reach my goal. That year was the best year of my life. I say this because I constantly saw small subtle changes throughout the process. Those subtle changes after a whole year turned out to be the new and improved body that I always wanted.

Three fundamental rules to understand when working out are these:

• If you want to lose weight then it is recommended to do total body workouts to increase your calorie expenditure and help drop the pounds. Circuit training, Tabata drills, High Intensity workouts are prime examples. Use high repetitions and lighter weight - this will get you lean and mean!

• If you want to gain weight, you want to go heavier with your weights doing less reps but more exercises. Some strategies are to break down your body parts into sections and focus on each section per day [i.e. chest & triceps, back & biceps, legs, arms and shoulders - do pyramid sets, supersets, or negatives].

• At some point you are going to want to maintain your size and figure. In the maintenance phase you have the luxury of switching up your routines and keeping them fun and creative. [i.e. do a push/pull day or alternating upper body day & lower body day, cross training]

Personally I recommend you having a partner with you when you go to your workouts. Partners are great for many reasons. They hold you accountable to show up for the workout, they motivate you to push yourself during the entire workout and not quit early, and help spot you when lifting heavy to help you avoid injury. If you are not knowledgable about working out, I highly recommend hiring a personal trainer. PT's are very knowledgable about exercising and can tailor a routine specifically for your body and your goals. This is beneficial because we all have a goal that we want to achieve, and deep down that desire has gotten us into the gym. With the right trainer, that goal becomes a reality and those results you have been waiting for are finally here!
When hiring a personal trainer you want to make sure that they are a good fit for you. Typically a trainer will allow you a free session with them to make sure that your personalities mesh well together and you like their style of training. In this session you should ask three questions.

1. What nationally accredited certification(s) do you have?
2. How long have you been training and what are your areas of expertise?
3. Have you dealt with someone with my goals before, and if so do you have any testimonials?

Just because you see someone in the gym with big muscles, doesn't necessarily mean that they know what they are doing. It just means that they have spent a lot of time in a gym. The last thing you want is someone that doesn't know what they are doing injuring you and prohibiting you from reaching your goals.

HOME WORKOUTS/DVD'S
I'm sure at some point in your life you have seen an infomercial for the best home workout system known to man. In 60 days or 90 days you will have the body of your dreams, or your money back guaranteed. This all sounds great, but how many people that you personally know have bought into these dvd's, actually followed through with them for their entirety, and seen drastic results? If they actually have gotten through the whole program, how many people continue through the program and do it again? My guess is not many. The most common reason why they don't do the program again is because they got bored with it. It's hard to workout at home with all the distractions of kids, work, pets, etc. You can spend a lot of money on pieces of gym equipment [i.e. Treadmill, Bowflex, Total Gym], but all too often they just become really expensive places to hang your clothes. Rather than wasting your money on an impulse, read through these options and see what works best for you.

You first want to ask yourself why you want to workout and make a change in your life. That WHY has to be so strong that you make it a priority in your life and quit making excuses. Once you have answered that question then you can decide if it's the right time to buy equipment and know that you aren't going to be wasting your money.
Next look around online at reviews and see what people are saying about the different video programs. Insanity, P90X, Beast Body, T25 are all common workouts that are promoted constantly on TV. What's great about these programs are that they require little equipment and have a very structured program designed to help you stay on track. As you progress in your fitness you can then take your workouts to the next level. Buy more equipment to increase your intensity and build more muscle, or join a local gym and amplify your options. Without variety and results, it's in our human nature to fizzle out and lose our enthusiasm. As a child, we are taught to be rewarded for doing something good. We have birthdays to celebrate being alive for another year, and we bribe our kids with treats for behaving well and getting good grades in school. We are programmed to look for those rewards in our lives to tell ourselves that we are doing something good. With this same mindset, it is a good idea to set up little goals for yourself so you feel achievements right off the bat. Those achievements will have a snowball effect on your confidence and inspire you to stay motivated and push through to your next goal. Examples of great goals to break through would be: only eat protein and veggies at night for dinner for a week; set time in your schedule to workout; do not sit down until after 7pm or 8pm; take 10,000 steps per day. These simple things go a long way making changes that you can notice within yourself and with your figure.
CONCLUSION: THE FOLLOW UP
I hope you enjoyed reading my book and will formulate a strategy for living your life. There are an infinite number of topics to discover out there, but this should lay a basic foundation to assist you in your journey. I am always around to help guide those along this healthy path, so please feel free to reach out to me on my website [www.totalbodyconstruction.com], email [jeff@totalbodyconstruction.com] or twitter @jmcmahontbc].