

# NUTS AND BOLTS OF FITNESS

BY CATHY RICHARDS

Let's start off with a quick overview of the four fitness components that I think are most important for overall health. For each item, it's NOT all or none, but I do want you to have each item on your radar so we can figure out what is the best mix of the different components.

## *Overall Daily Activity*

This is different than formal exercise sessions. It just means MOVING MORE throughout the day and it's awesome for your health in a multitude of ways including reduction of disease risk, burning calories, and maintaining joint mobility. Oftentimes, it's convenient and eye-opening to get a sense of how much movement you get in a typical day by using a pedometer like a FitBit or an Apple watch. There are even free apps you can get on your phone. You may have heard that 10,000 steps per day is a good goal. I'd rather you track your typical steps per day and then set a goal to increase your steps by a certain percentage gradually.

## *Cardiovascular Exercise*

Aerobic exercise is moving at a higher intensity that causes you to breathe heavier but you shouldn't be working so hard that you need to stop after just a minute or two. Twenty minutes is usually the target time period but you can start with less. This means brisk walking, using an elliptical machine, jogging (for some people – for others, this is too intense!), Zumba, or a cardio circuit (like my video in this course!). We need aerobic exercise for heart health, burning calories, and a hundred other reasons!

## *Strength Training*

Ah ha! We've gotten to what I call the secret weapon of fitness! I say that because so many people are not doing strength training! It's valuable to strengthen your muscles, prevent back pain, burn more calories all day long, protect your joints, and many, many more reasons! You can do a strength training routine with weight machines, free weights, elastic tubing, or just your body weight. Some people do a lot, but you can also do just a little! In this course, we'll do a short body weight circuit that I hope you'll love!

## *Stretching*

Does the body good! Especially as we age, our joints and muscles feel better when we take them through a short series of targeted stretches that elongate the muscles and promote a full range of motion for each joint. I hope you enjoy the stretching video that is part of this course!

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## *How Do You Put it All Together in a Week?*

You've got so many options! Start with figuring out how many days you realistically think you can schedule yourself a short 10-20-minute exercise session, then I want you to PUT THEM ON THE CALENDAR! Some people like to keep the time slots all similar (early morning, right after work, etc.). Other people like to break it up so that there's not undue pressure on any one part of your schedule. For instance, you could schedule yourself for three times a week for 20 minutes. Maybe you'll get up 20 minutes early just ONCE per week, such as every Tuesday morning. Then, you'll schedule yourself for after dinner every Thursday night, and then commit to ONE weekend slot when your schedule is more flexible. Remember, you need to actually write it on your calendar! Write it here also:

## *Daily Step goal (if you have one)*

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## *Fitness Plan*

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