

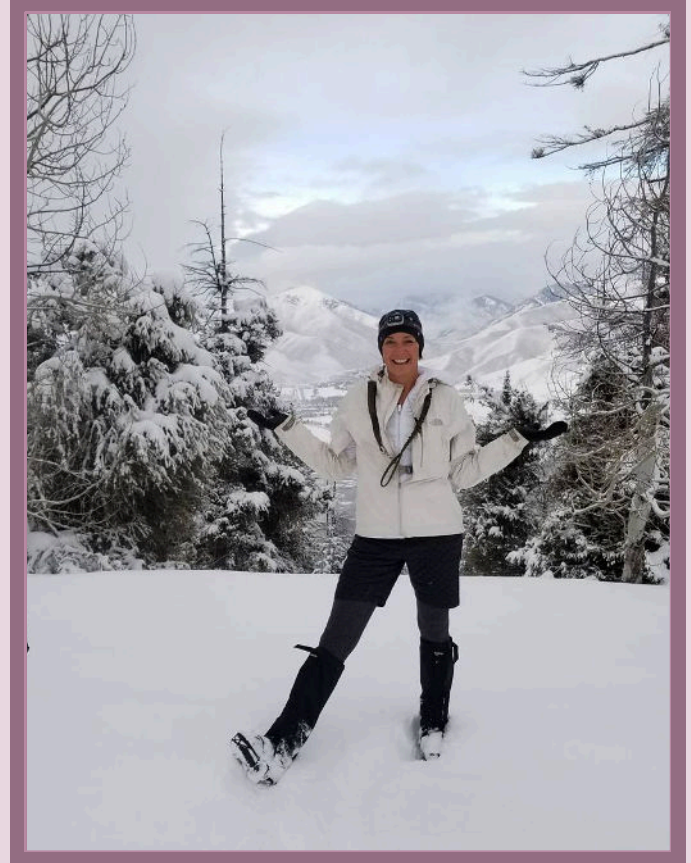


Guide 1
Choosing
your
exercise

DESIGN YOUR EXERCISE PROGRAM

Choosing Your Exercise

ANGELA FREEBIRD - HABIT STRATEGIST



HELLO HELLO!

ANGELA FREEBIRD, HABIT STRATEGIST (w/Lucky the hound)

In my 25 years as a personal trainer, I have:

- opened two boutique gyms
- created a strength training system for groups
- trained other trainers
- worked with hundreds of clients from all over the United States.

And I still love working out. I mean, I really do enjoy it.

HOW? I know how to make it FUN. Here's a guide to support you in figuring out what kind of exercise you are going to work best for you including making it more enjoyable.

STEP ONE

Desired Outcomes

STEP TWO

Finding Joy

STEP THREE

Bringing it Together





→ **WHERE TO START?**

HOW TO PICK THE "RIGHT" EXERCISE

First take a breath. You've got this.

Second. **There is NO "right" exercise.**

There is the best exercise for YOU right now.

And that will change, trust me I've been doing this for a LONG time and it changes!

Let's just take all the pressure off making the RIGHT choice, shall we? (Pressure is very rarely fun nor is it helpful)

One more invitation, throw on some party music to get you in the mood and let's talk about some ways to decide what kind of exercise you are going to begin with.

There is No Right!



Step 01.



**LET'S CHAT
DESIRED
OUTCOMES**

Goals, desires, wishes.

Use whatever language suits you.

Basically what do you want to attain or accomplish as your outcome from your new exercise program.

DESIRED OUTCOMES



GO A LITTLE DEEPER FOR CLARITY!

The following pages have examples to get you rolling.

Feel free to journal or sit and think.

Whatever you do to get clear on YOU and what YOU want.



→ I want to Lose Weight.

Yep at the top as example one.

It's one of the most popular reasons.

AND a-okay and here I am inviting you to go deeper.

→ WHY do you want to lose weight?

What will happen when you do so?

Nothing wrong with losing weight however often it isn't enough emotional fire to take us very far.

Here is an example of a dialog going deeper on losing weight:

I want to lose weight.

(Why??)

So that I can fit in my clothes.

(Excellent- and WHY is that important?)

So that I feel good about myself

(Okay- now we are getting somewhere- WHY is that important?)

So that I can do the things I enjoy confidently.

(Roger that. What would you like to do?)

Go hiking with my bestie.

Okay! perfect. Now we are a deeper area because guess what?!? You can totally pick an exercise program that will get you confidently hiking enjoying time with your bestie with or without losing weight.- don't hate me. It is true

 **Doctor's Orders.** Another popular one.

What exactly is the doctor recommending?

Heart health or Bone health or maybe your blood pressure is a bit high?

- For a healthy heart, it's great to move in a way that elevates your heart rate for extended periods of time.
- Bone health- you'll need to start strength training and work up to heavier weights.
- Blood Pressure- circuit training with strength moves alternating upper and lower body exercises are excellent for this.

It's really not a great recommendation to just "lose some weight". (gasp!)

Indeed, you may end up losing weight as you start moving or eating better however I STRONGLY (yes all caps) urge you to change one small healthy habit at a time with the focus on **BEING HEALTHY** not losing weight.

There are several reasons for this recommendation and the biggest one is this:

Often the way humans are trying to lose weight is not only not sustainable, it's not very healthy.

 **FOCUS on health, not losing weight as those two things are NOT synonymous.**

These are just little glimpses into how KNOWING what your desired outcome is will shape how you choose your exercise.

BONUS INQUIRY ON THIS ONE:

What do YOU want?

Invitation to get curious about how you feel about taking care of your body?

Most of us just drag it around until it starts talking to us through pain so please do not judge yourself (again, unfun and unhelpful!!) and do your best to start listening.

Taking some time with these powerful questions will get you to significant answers (or more questions)

and that will SUPER DUPER HELP in getting a new exercise program to stick.



I want to rock X

X = some awesome activity.

Activities I have trained people to get stronger for:

- playing with the grandkids
- mountain biking
- confidently skiing
- hiking (either just starting out or doing something BIG)
- lugging the groceries to the car and then to the house
- walking the dog without pain
- running
- pickleball
- tennis

And the list goes on...

Whatever activity you desire to be able to do with more ease (or start doing!) there are specific exercises and types of exercise that will get you where you want to go faster than others.

A BIG helpful piece of sticking with your NEW exercise program is seeing that you are getting results.

It's hard to keep yourself going when you don't seem to be getting closer to what you want.

Line up the better exercises supporting what you want to do and it will increase the changes of sticking with your New exercise program because you WILL see a difference.



DESIRED OUTCOMES



YOUR TURN

I WANT TO BE ABLE TO:

(FEEL FREE TO INCLUDE WHYS AND SO THATS TO GO AS DEEP AS YOU CAN)

A large white rounded rectangular area with a light purple background. On the left side, there are 20 small purple circles, each aligned with a horizontal line that spans the width of the area. This layout is designed for writing a list of desired outcomes or goals.



01.

Step 02.



**WHAT SOUNDS
enjoyable?**

If you enjoy it, you'll be WAY more likely to stick with it.

THE JOY FACTOR →

BUCKLE UP- PARADOX AHEAD

What would you LOVE to do? What sounds FUN?

→ **BUT what about my desired outcome?**

It's true.

Sometimes the best exercise for the desired outcome is not out first choice of fun things.

Yes. Also there is money and scheduling and all kinds of other things that could influence the exercise choice.

AND

for just a bit let us just imagine what could be enjoyable.

Often just starting with something that you really think might be fun is enough to build the momentum into doing some of the other more practical exercises that will get you to your desired outcomes.

Joyful Idea 1

→ **Classes.**

I personally LOVE groups. I love training groups and I love learning in groups. If this is you then google is your new friend and enlist your inner child to help you go try out some classes.

PRO TIP: when you do try one out, be brave and chat up the person next to you. Let them know if you are nervous, excited, or ask if they do this all the time. Most people love to help out the newbie, and they just need an invitation to do so. Setting up that invitation is on you. (You've got this)

- **YOGA**
- **HITT**
- **PILATES**
- **BARRE**
- **BOOTCAMP**
- **CYCLING**
- **ROWING**
- **STRENGTH TRAINING**
- **ZUMBA**
- **CIRCUIT TRAINING**
- **KETTLEBELL**
- **DANCE (ALL KINDS)**

 **SUPER IMPORTANT TIP: TAKE CARE OF YOUR BODY!!!**

Do NOT Ever let an instructor overrule what YOU know isn't right for you!! EVER. Unfortunately there are some (well meaning??) teachers out there who don't know **NOT to push.**

You are the expert on if it is okay for you. Underdo. FULL STOP. 

And if it doesn't feel good overall, then it's not the right fit for you.

Too often humans assume that they are at fault when it's as simple as,

nah, that's not my color/flavor/style/right exercise class.

Joyful Idea 2

→ HOME Sweet HOME

Some people find it much easier to just get some movement in while in their home. If this is you, here are some ideas and again, google is magic for supporting this.

- **YOUTUBE**
- **INSTAGRAM**
- **WELL-KNOWN BRANDS LIKE PELATON**
- **LESSER KNOWN SMALL PRESENCE HUMANS**

As mentioned, if its not a good fit, move on and keep looking until you find something that makes you want to move. IF you find something you LOVE but still aren't doing it skip on over to GUIDE TWO in this series talking about making it a habit

PRO TIP: Put into your search different keywords like:

- **Health at every size** if you are looking for all body types (I LOVE THIS ONE!!) I just found this awesome neurodivergent friendly human doing some cool exercise videos on YouTube in a non-traditionally sized body. #awesome @diversepersonaltraining if you feel called to check that out. I have no affiliation with this person however I am now a fan after watching a couple of her videos.
- **Strength Training for beginners or Kettlebells for beginners.** NOTE: I love the idea of you trying some of these things out without purchasing a lot of new stuff until you feel like its a good fit so start with body weight. Nothing worse than a lot of exercise equipment gathering dust mocking your decision making, let's not go there. Also, as mentioned above, if it doesn't work for you, don't assume it's you. Keep looking for something that feels good.
- **Low Impact HIIT.** I went down this rabbit hole and there are some very unique funny people doing some cool exercise programs that are on the safe side for hips and knees. If you have sensitive knees and hips this is a place to check out.
- **African Dance Beginning Workouts** - OMG. These humans look super fun. @KukuwaFitness if you want to check this out. Again, I am not affiliated and again, am now a fan because this is creative, high energy and looks like fun.

Joyful Idea 3

→ Make it EASY

Start a walking program. Walking is awesome and it's a fantastic way to start moving your body and getting in a routine of exercising. Make sure you have good footwear (Gear, my people, gear!) and here are some ways to make it more FUN!

- Walk with a buddy
- Walk alone (sometimes it is the only time solo during the day!!)
- Listen to a podcast
- Enjoy listening to music
- Learn- I love listening to classes and books while walking!
- Drive to a beautiful place to walk
- Walk right outside your door (make it easy)
- Set a goal to walk further every day (my sister loves goals like this)
- Never ever set a goal about distance (this is my desired way... I go with what feels right)
- Go to the shelter and walk dogs (and then adopt a couple!!)
- Find a park and walk there
- Walk after lunch and notice how it aids in digestion
- Walk before lunch and make lunch a delicious treat post walk
- and the beat goes on... YOU. CAN. MAKE. THIS. FUN.

PRO TIP: There is no need to suffer. Please don't go from zero to hero here. There's TIME. Enjoy the journey!

Joyful Idea 4

→ Try out Gyms.

Gyms can be intimidating! Scary big buildings with lots of super buff humans strutting around. Here are a few things to remember about gyms and some tips to trying them out.

THINGS TO REMEMBER: AKA THE SECRET GYM RAT HANDSHAKE

- The strutting gym humans are not paying attention to you. I promise. They are busy counting reps, flexing and checking out their form. It may not seem this way, however, I've been a gym rat for most of my life and this is the truth.
- Most humans in gyms are happy to help. In general, it's just like asking for directions when out walking around. Most people are delighted to be asked and are happy to help.
- The staff at your "try this out gym" are also usually happy to help. Just be honest about your gym experience and they will lean in.
IF THEY DON'T... that's NOT your gym. (and it's their loss)
- Spending a few days trying out different machines and areas of a gym is a solid investment. What feels big and overwhelming when you first arrive will not feel that way once you pick a small area in that big gym and inhabit it for a session or two.

PRO TIP: If you are new to gyms and find one that you like, IF you can swing it, invest in a training session to learn the lay of the land. I have a guide on selecting a personal trainer if you would like more details on this. If that isn't in your spending plan, sometimes the front desk staff can be helpful or again, some of the strutting humans will most likely be willing to show you some things.

As ALWAYS. LESS. IS. MORE. Do not overdo at the beginning.

Joyful Idea 5

→ BOUTIQUE WORKOUT SPOTS

This is one of the more popular developments in the workout world. I opened my first boutique strength training gym in Ketchum, ID in 2001 and left it in 2018. It was a source of GREAT joy for me and my people. These can be a GREAT fit **or not** and thankfully there are many different flavors now so you can see if it calls to you. Price tag on these is usually a bit more than a gym membership and less than 1:1 personal training so that may or may not be a factor for you.

SUGGESTIONS ON TRYING OUT SMALL WORKOUT SPOTS:

- Once you find one that is of interest, reach out and make contact with the owner or the manager/front desk people. Feel into the vibe and again, YOU GET TO DECIDE IF IT WORKS FOR YOU. If the vibe isn't your style, move on. For me, I like working out where people are inviting and friendly and if that isn't how it feels, I move on.
- Try it on for size. Again, I recommend chatting (to the best of your ability) with other folks in the group. In my gym, the regulars were always delighted to chat with the newbies.
- **WORK AT YOUR LEVEL. (PERIOD.)** Do not feel like you have to keep up with everyone at the beginning. When I was teaching, I made sure there were options for new people (and my regulars) so that they could modify to fit their fitness level. **That SHOULD (yes, opinionated here!!) be available for you. You should feel BETTER not hurt after a session.**

PRO TIP:

Do not judge a human's teaching or training capacity on what they look like.

Unfortunately there are a quite a few humans that look amazing and become trainers without the skillset to back it up. They simply recommend doing what they do and that might not be safe which makes it not a good fit for you.

Great trainers can train anyone safely. That's what you want. I have had many humans remark on how strong they feel WITHOUT massive suffering after my workouts.

That is what you are looking for... especially at the start.

STEP 02. → **YOUR TURN**

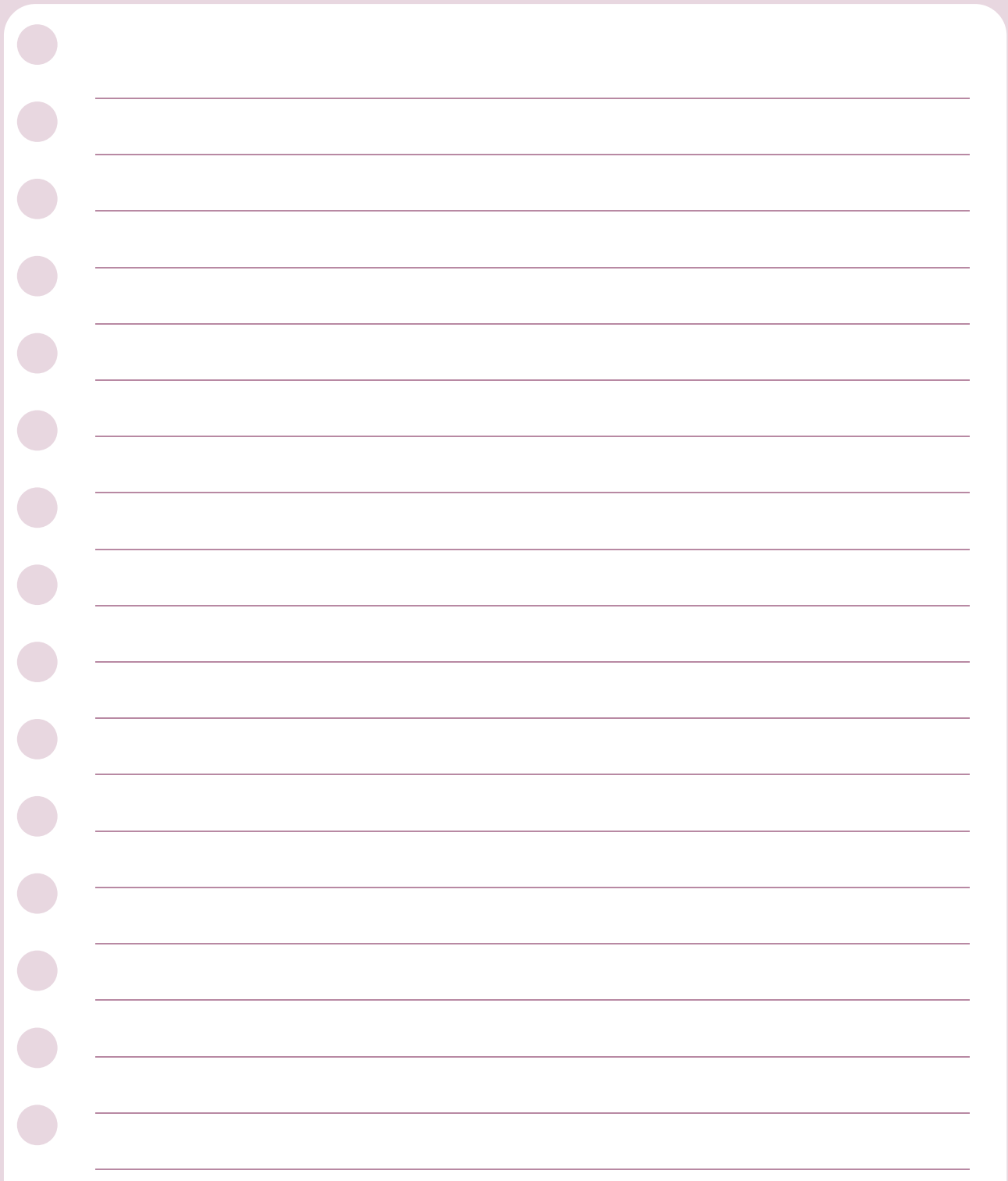
THE JOY FACTOR

THESE THINGS SOUND FUN

AND

I AM COMMITTED TO BEING BRAVE ENOUGH TO TAKE BABY STEPS TOWARD

CHECKING IT OUT:



A white notepad with rounded corners and a hole punch on the left side. It contains 15 horizontal lines for writing.



Step 03.



**BRING IT TOGETHER AND
JUST START**

BRINGING IT TOGETHER

→ **You know your desired outcome**

→ **You have some ideas of what would be fun**

Desired Outcome + Joy = Results.

Tips on bringing the two together



You know your desired outcome

You have some ideas of what would be fun

WHAT IF THE TWO THINGS ARE NOT THE SAME??

Quick True Story.

A client/friend of mine stopped me after attending one of my classes with this question:

“Should I be running or swimming?”

I asked, “Which do you enjoy more?”

The reply, **“Oh definitely swimming. But I weigh five pounds more when I swim rather than run, so should I be running?”**

This is a true story. I was a bit taken aback until I realized that this person was seriously asking.

Here's the truth.

Moving in a way that you enjoy moving is SO much more important TO ME than five pounds.

All day every day including Sunday.

Here's more truth.

No one.

NO ONE cares if you weight five pounds more or less.

The people you interact with most likely DO care that you are enjoying yourself as much as possible because that will seep out into the rest of your life.

Things to Think about



Habits, like your new exercise program, are formed when we can **connect to our desired outcome** in a way that **is not super painful** especially at the beginning.



If your desired outcome and what sounds like fun are not aligned, please please please, pretty pretty please consider starting with what sounds fun and that will bring you JOY.



Start by setting that joyful movement into a habit **THEN** set your sights on slowly pivoting into movement that is more aligned with your desired outcome.

An Invitation for You

This is a solid invitation to do anything you can to ditch the all or nothing thinking.

Example of what I mean by all or nothing:

If this walking program isn't going to get me to lose weight quickly then... I guess I am just not meant to exercise.

NO! It's very possible you just are meant to walk and get stronger at the weight you are at now!

Unhooking exercise from the desire to lose weight is not easy because we are so conditioned to make exercising about losing weight HOWEVER it can be done.

It is SO worth the effort to do so!!

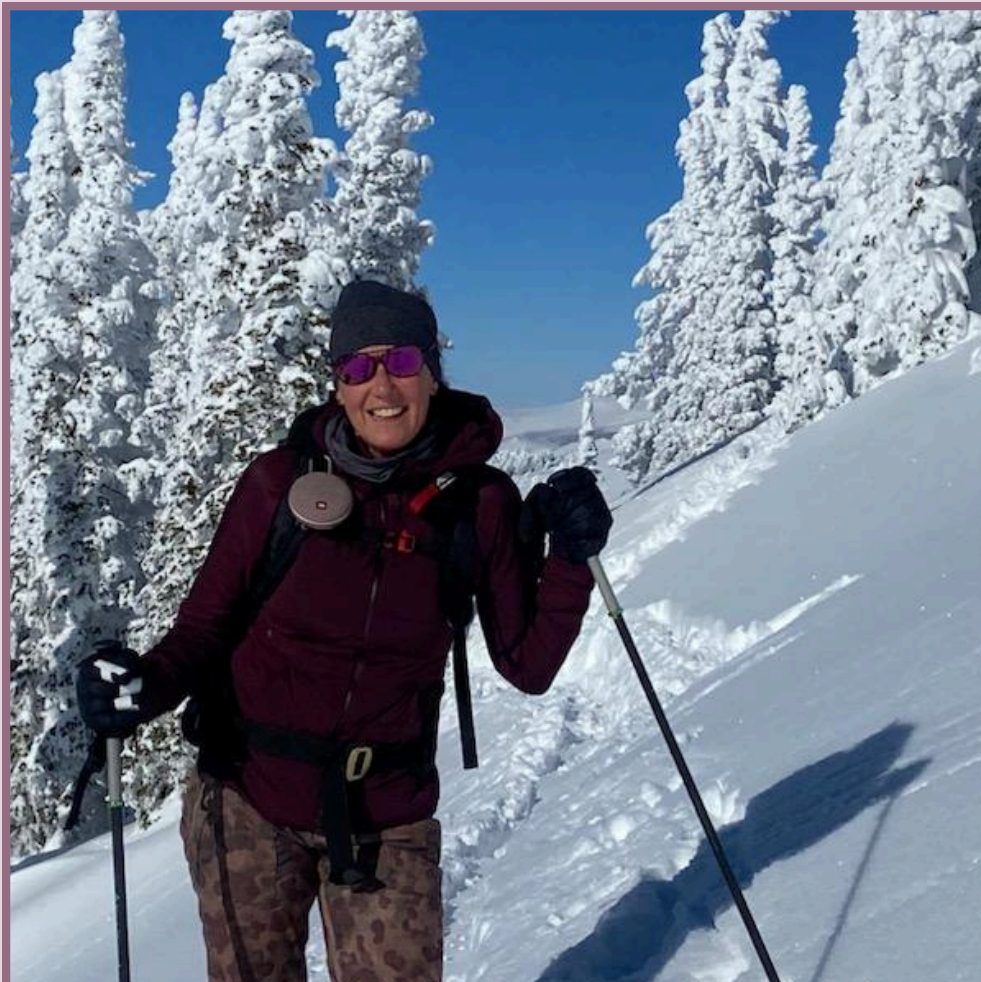
Move for the Love of
moving to get started!

This can be your Truth!

Exercising can be FUN and it is well worth the time and energy to figure out what kind of exercise you might enjoy



Your New exercise program can be a life altering
HABIT!





Now that you know what exercise you want to start with you are invited to enjoy:

GUIDE TWO OF DESIGN YOUR EXERCISE PROGRAM

How to Make it a Habit

HERE'S THE LINK TO GET THAT GUIDE!

★ *Wait... hold on*

If you still don't know what exercise you might want to start with, my coaching program, **Tiny & Mighty Habit Kickstart** is a full month of support and priced at an easy yes.

★ **MORE INFO ON THE TINY & MIGHTY** ★

BONUS STEP 1 INSIGHTS

Desired Outcomes → Suggested Exercises

- Competent hiking** → Walk. Start flat if you are starting from scratch and then slowly add hills. Find and invest in great walking shoes (yes, running shoes and cross-trainers will also work).
- Hike. Start smaller and slowly work up to more hills and longer (if that is your desired outcome)
- GYM SUPPORT. If you decide to add in some strength training, then:
- Step-ups, and knee-ups on a box or a bench for longer reps (work up to 20 then add some weight) are super helpful.
- Core exercises are always great and PLANK is one of the best ones (so much better than sit-ups!!). Once PLANK feels good, do some plank alternatives like lifting a foot or a hand or both while in plank.
- Seated Hamstring Curls are one of the least functional moves however strong hamstrings support your knees. (HELPFUL!) This is the machine that you pull your heels back toward you and feel the back of your legs. (not the extension- that's important!)

- Heart Health** → Cardio Exercise. EASY DOES IT.

Anything that gets your heart rate elevated for extended periods of time. NOTE: You do not have to be suffering for results and obviously follow your doctor's orders. OBVS.

Walking, Elliptical machine, bike (outside or stationary), rowing, swimming (although unless you are a swimmer, sustained swimming is on the harder side), Low impact hitt or step or dance workouts

- Reduce High Blood Pressure** → Again, hot coffee is, well, hot and listen to your doctor, physical therapist and all other health professionals on your team... ALWAYS.

And cool to know that circuit training using strength moves can lower blood pressure. Again, EASY DOES IT as you learn how to do this.

Alternate an upper body exercise like chest press with a lower body exercise like a squat. 2-3 X then move on to another circuit that alternates an upper body movement with a lower body movement. High blood pressure aside, this is a really fun way to strength train- plus super efficient as you are "resting" one part of the body while working the other so you can get a lot done in less time.

BONUS STEP 1 INSIGHTS PAGE TWO

Desired Outcomes → Suggested Exercises

Mountain Biking

- Bike. Lots of biking. Inside, on a road bike and then move to learning how to mountain bike.
- GYM SUPPORT. If you decide to add in some strength training, then:
 - Step-ups, and knee-ups on a box or a bench for longer reps (work up to 20 then add some weight) are great to get stronger on the mt. bike.
- Core exercises are always great! PLANKS and lower back strengtheners will make your mountain bike season more fun. Any functional core exercise enhances your aerobic capacity.
- Nasty anaerobic short sets. Treadmill turned OFF at 5% incline and do tabata sprints (20 seconds on 10 seconds off for 4 minutes) and you'll be crushing the short hills outside when the trail dries.

Getting on the floor to play with grandkids

- Strength Training is great for this. IF this is you, make sure you learn how to warm up really well (Pay someone good to teach you or if you are self-learner, find people on Youtube). Do not overdo at the beginning.
- Squats to a chair and stand up without momentum is a good place to start. Also holding on to that same chair, step back and drop a knee down (as far as you can comfortably at the beginning) and then use your leg strength and "cheat" with your hands to come back up to standing.
- In the gym step up on boxes (low is fine) and come back down. All this will help with balance and leg strength.
- Any CORE work you can do is super helpful. If plank is too much, try a modified plank with your hands on a couch or chair (make sure its not going to slide anywhere) and step gently back into a plank position. Hold for 15-30 seconds and work up to a few sets. Seriously this is helpful for getting up and down.
- Balance (by a wall so you can hold on as needed) on one foot. Notice how the ankle, knee and hip all work to stabilize you. Balance is a key ingredient to getting up and down. Work up to 30-60 seconds on each side. Hold on as needed. Yep, just repeated that.

A Strong Opinion on how to Lose Weight

Okay. If you really want to lose weight then you need to:

- Lift Heavy Weights.
- Do 1.5 hours of cardio every day but Sunday
- Circuit Train 3 days a week
- Just do Yoga but make sure it's hot.
- Suffer greatly with interval training

Any of the above sound familiar? There are a lot of professionals out in the world who look very lean and gorgeous. They are SELLING a way of losing weight to other humans. Nothing wrong with selling. Nothing. I'm all for it. I sell coaching programs. HOWEVER once there starts to be this:

THIS. IS. WHAT. YOU. SHOULD. DO. for guaranteed success language there is a problem.

Because what happens when that success doesn't come, the buyer assumes THEY did it wrong. Just didn't try hard enough. Tries harder, without success and then gives up, thinking that they the buyer, just doesn't have the willpower or the drive or the ability to be successful.

That's just not true. Certain exercise programs will lead to weight loss for some people and not for other people and how hard they try is only one of the many factors involved.

A Strong Opinion on how to Lose Weight

Will the list above support weight loss? Maybe. Certainly in some bodies. So does just sitting on the couch eating way too much sugar, and fast food... for SOME bodies (I actually have a friend like this, just naturally very thin regardless of exercise or diet). Other bodies eat super healthy, do a lot of the above and still maintain a higher percentage of fat. BECAUSE we are all naturally different sizes.

AND being the healthiest version of you by doing healthy things MIGHT create weight loss, it might not. Don't let the success of your New Exercise Program be contingent on weight loss.

to REALLY find JOY and find peace in your body, start moving it in a way that feels good and is the next best step for you.

Find humans who can support you in learning to lean gently into loving your body where it is right. this. minute. That's where the true power and freedom and joy is. And it's a process. I do not do it perfectly AT ALL. We are constantly swimming in, you "aren't quite right" soup so we can buy things to tuck, life and shrink ourselves.

Enough. Start to notice how many humans (especially the younger ones... hooray) who are drawing a line in the sand saying, ENOUGH. I love my body as is. Next.

BONUS STEP 1 INSIGHTS PAGE THREE

Desired Outcomes → Suggested Exercises

Feel Better. Do Better.

When I exercise well, I have a better chance at eating well. I tend to work better. And I noticeably feel happier. I also tend to fit in my jeans better. These are some of the exercises that work for all of those reasons (including dropping some pounds) for me.

Losing Weight

- Strength Training with heavy weights
or
Functional Circuit Training with cardio sets
- Long Slow Distance Cardio Hiking or walking or
Skinning on my Split Board
- Mountain Biking for short and long rides
- Recovery days will a soft roller.
- Resting well between workouts AND taking breaks
from work is a very large component.

My Specialty as a personal trainer for 25 years has been to use circuits of strength work with cardio intervals which has been transformative for my clients out on the trails, on the snow slopes and when stepping on the scale (although more so with a tape measure).

If that calls to you, that might be worth an experiment and I can help you out with that.