

In the business world, it is understood that company assets, such as equipment, depreciate with age. What this means of course, is that over time the equipment will decrease in value and function and eventually need to be replaced. Likewise, regrettably, each one of our physical bodies is progressively “depreciating.”

On the other hand, as people progress in their years on the job, most of them *appreciate* in their career value due to increased skills and experience. Unfortunately the crossing of these two paths of people that are physically deteriorating while appreciating skill-wise happens too soon in the lives of people. For example, Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, back problems, heart disease, cancer, osteoporosis, depression, and chronic stress are becoming commonplace in our lives. As a result, organizations’ human assets are diminished along with a reduction in the quality of living for millions. This physical and oftentimes accompanying emotional degeneration can be devastating to both businesses and lives.

And, while the couch potato lifestyle is often one of the culprits in our physical corrosion, the desperate solution many seem to seek is medication or surgery, or they simply accept

this fate and resign themselves to being stuck in a quagmire of physical mediocrity. While medications may provide temporary relief, and surgery can be helpful, the truth is that improving our lifestyle usually produces *far* better and more permanent results. It is in fact possible for each one of us, no matter our age or condition, to steadily experience thrilling restoration. If you can move, you can improve...and to move is to *live*. Step by step we can fortify ourselves physically, which can lead us to explosively exciting fully alive living!

### Benefits of a Fully Alive Wellness Lifestyle

While the benefits of a fully alive wellness lifestyle are too numerous to detail here, a few are of prominence to the daily realities of a dietary manager. These are *in addition* to being leaner, healthier, and having an athletic appearance. They include:

#### 1. Reduced Stress and Burnout

The facts are that work and life are demanding. Most of us face daily pressures on the job. Constant deadlines and the making of good business decisions are the certainty of working and living. This, my friends, is not likely to change. As a result, stress hormones can build up in our bodies, which

can lead to wearing out our physical and emotional resources, leading to exhaustion, depression, and disease. However, when we habitually fortify ourselves physically, the negative and perhaps life squelching effects of powerful stress hormones colliding with our body’s immune system and metabolism on a regular basis are minimized and even marginalized. As a result we can think better, sleep better, and feel more relaxed, even in the midst of demanding work.

#### 2. Greater Confidence/Courage

Vince Lombardi was correct when he stated that, “Fatigue makes cowards of us all.” To take anything to a higher level requires small amounts of courage on a daily basis. Whether it is improving the results of your department, your company or your individual performance, each of us will be challenged to progressively push to areas where we may have never gone before. To do so might mean that we must confront our fears, insecurities, or perceived inadequacies. We all have some degree of these, whether we want to admit it or not.

A powerful tool to assist in moving us through fear into greater courage is by setting physical improvement goals,

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# Wellness Recept



by | *Fred Schafer, MS, CFT*

*Fred Schafer, MS, CFT—a nationally recognized wellness consultant, author, and professional speaker—will deliver more health and wellness strategies at the DMA Annual Meeting in July.*

**"We either make ourselves miserable, or we make ourselves strong: the amount of work is the same."**

*Anonymous*

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and then gradually achieving them. As we do, our stamina is stretched and strengthened and the carryover effect into other areas of our lives is often dramatic as well.

### 3. Enhanced Credibility

We must walk the talk ourselves. You can try to encourage or teach others to eat better and make healthier choices till the cows come home. However, if your physical “home” is not *step by step* being remodeled into a fortress of better fitness, you can probably forget about helping anyone else to get an “extreme makeover” of their nutrition and wellness habits. Please don’t interpret this as meaning you must look like Sally or Sam super model. Rather, the point is we should be committed to better nutrition and fitness ourselves, exemplified by our own daily physical activity and nutrition habits.

The second part of the credibility factor ties into self-discipline. There are many keys to being successful in your work, but self-discipline certainly ranks near the top. In my 25 year management/leadership career, I have learned that many of my “employee” problems are usually “me” problems! For example, if I want my site supervisors to set challenging goals and then stretch themselves, but I am not in the habit of doing so, my words carry little weight. But when they can see me doing so, it often inspires them to stretch themselves as well.

### 4. Enjoy the Rewards of a Dedicated Career

After I graduated from college and started my first job, I gave up most of the aspects of the fitness and nutrition lifestyle I had practiced since the eighth grade. I did this due to long hours, stress, the learning curve of a new profession, etc. It wasn’t long before I began to experience a gain in excess body fat, aches and pains, and a tendency to become irritable. Then, as I read the industry journals and business periodicals, I was struck by the number of premature deaths of many company executives due to heart disease. I decided then that I did not want to join the ranks of those who bust their butt building careers, but then expire before they can retire and enjoy their golden years.

With that in mind, I now coach others and strive myself to focus not just on the health of my career, but also my physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and spiritual health. As a result, your career will likely prosper more powerfully and be sustained with greater substance.

### Three Key Tips/Ingredients to the “Recipe” of Wellness

In my presentations and consulting practice, nine key ingredients to the recipe for greater wellness are outlined. In the remainder of this article, three of the most essential ones will be discussed. Even a pinch or two of these ingredients, added on a regular

basis, can improve the flavor of your existence!

#### 1. Write Specific Plans

Most of us have heard of the wisdom of putting our goals in writing. Related to goals are the words *objectives, plans, vision, dreams, outcomes*, etc. Whichever word you choose, the idea is to deeply think about what it is you want to do, be, achieve, or have. The power of stating one’s intentions in writing, as specifically as possible, is profound. Perhaps the best-known research in regards to this principle was done at Yale University. In 1953 researchers polled the graduating class of Yale University to see who had written career and financial goals. They found that only 3 percent of the graduates had a set of clearly defined *written* goals in these areas. In 1973 a follow up was done and it was found that the 3 percent of the graduates who had the clear and written goals had amassed a financial fortune worth more than the other 97 percent combined!

This is powerful evidence that goal setting is a proven process for improving any area of our lives. I have personally used this principle to improve every business I have directed, and it is now the first step suggested to those seeking enhanced wellness. Precisely how would you like to see yourself improve physically, emotionally, and so forth, in the next 1-5 years?



## Wellness Essential Ingredients

Even a pinch or two of these “wellness” ingredients, added on a regular basis, can improve the flavor of your existence!



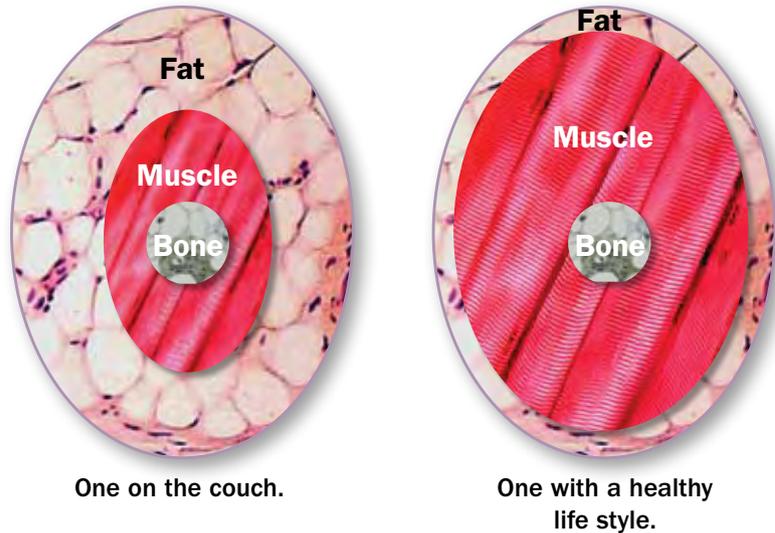
About a year ago the president of a large foodservice organization contacted me for some wellness coaching. Her goals, she stated verbally, were to “Lose weight and get in shape.” After some review, she revised her goals (with a little help from me) and stated in her own handwriting that she wanted to, *“Spend the rest of her existence on planet earth, thriving in a more fully alive, lean, 145 pound, fat-incinerating, anti-aging, higher-performing, better-looking, more capable and confident wellness machine!”* That is a little more specific and exciting than just, “Losing weight.” She then went on to get even more precise in regards to her desired health, performance, and appearance results, and she determined which behaviors she needed to adapt and which ones she needed to reduce.

The danger of goal setting, though, can be becoming obsessed with the goal or feeling like a failure if goals are not reached. Instead, remember that it is “Progression, not perfection” that counts. The real goal in all you do should be to improve *function* first, as “Form follows function.” As long as a person is gradually improving their function, they should consider that success!

## 2. Improve Your Composition

No person on the planet needs to lose weight. That may be a shocking statement, but nevertheless, the truth. The reason it is true is that, “losing weight” is just not specific enough. If a person’s singular focus is just to lose weight, and they are successful, it is likely that up to 30 percent of the weight they lose may come from muscle and bone. This is not in a person’s best interest, because as we lose muscle and bone, we compromise our immune system and metabolism, and set ourselves up for a host of other lowered health concerns, including osteoporosis. And, if we lose 30 percent of our weight from muscle/bone, we simply become, “smaller fatter people,” because percentage-wise

Figure 1  
**These are cross-sections of two identically sized thighs...**



the amount of fat has likely increased on our bodies. Perhaps the greatest concern of simply losing weight alone is that we become lower performing people as well. Muscle and bone are the power sources of the body. They are like the engine and battery in an automobile. The smaller and weaker they are, the slower you go.

The better way to go is to improve your composition. This means that we would work to shed any excess body fat we have, and hold on for dear life to our muscle and bone. Ideally, most of us would want to *add* some muscle and bone to our bodies. Most people are afraid of doing this, as they think muscle will make them bigger. However, on average, a pound of muscle on the body is only one-fifth as large as a pound of fat. Muscle usually makes us smaller and leaner, not bigger. It also makes us healthier and more alive, as a pound of muscle on the body burns about 50 calories per day, while a pound of fat averages between 2-9 calories per day. The amount of muscle that a person carries on their frame is responsible for up to 70 percent of their metabolism.

To see how this works on the body, take a look at *Figure 1*. This figure shows two thighs of equal size and diameter. This shows what you might

find if you looked under the skin of a de-conditioned couch potato and a well conditioned active person. The couch potato has a growing layer of fat, shrinking layer of muscle, and bones getting weak and at risk for osteoporosis. Meanwhile, the active person has the exact opposite, with improvements in muscle, lowered fat and healthy strong bones. This concept of improving composition also improves virtually every indicator of health while simultaneously improving one’s ability to perform at their highest level, both physically and emotionally.

## 3. Progressively Get Stronger

So exactly how does one improve their composition? It’s simple, really. We used to think that aerobic training was the quickest and most effective way to shed unwanted excess body fat. Aerobics, jogging, swimming, and biking were the activities to turn to when we wanted to slim down. Boy, were we misled. The idea was that when you perform low level aerobic exercise your body relied on calories from fat. Sounds good, right? Well, there were a couple of major limitations with this method.

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First of all you only burn fat calories while the aerobics are performed. If you do 20 minutes, then you only burn fat for 20 minutes; if you do two hours, then you only burn for two hours. Secondly, if you are overzealous with aerobics your body actually eats away at metabolically active lean tissue (a.k.a. muscle), leaving you with lowered calorie requirements. Ever wonder why you eat the same amount but still put on fat pounds? A loss in lean tissue will do that to you every time. So where does that leave you?

The solution is what is known as progressive resistance training or PRT. Progressive resistance training is any form of exercise that requires you to work against resistance, and as you get stronger, modifying the resistance so that your body is continually forced to adapt and improve. PRT usually involves some form of weight training, but can include body weight resistance exercises (pushups, lunges, etc.), tubing, machines, and so forth. You have probably heard about the many benefits of resistance training. Here are just a few:

- Increased muscle strength and flexibility
- Injury prevention and recuperation
- Improved bone density and balance

But what about fat burn? Here are the two reasons that resistance training is the most effective way to burn fat. The first one is called oxygen debt. Now I know debt isn't usually a word that we enjoy...but in this case I'm sure you will agree that it's a great thing. Resistance training puts your body into oxygen debt, which means you will burn fat as you recover from your workout. And this effect can last quite awhile. In fact, studies have shown an increase in calorie burning for up to three days following a resistance training workout.

The other way that fat burn is accomplished with resistance training is through an increase in your resting metabolism. This happens because lean tissue burns more calories than fatty tissue. As stated before, one pound of muscle burns about 50 calories each day at rest—compared to 2-9 calories per pound of fat. When you perform resistance training exercises your body composition will change to contain more lean tissue, thus resulting in extra calories burned while you sleep. What could be better than

that? Resistance training is truly worth your time. Talk about an exercise that keeps on giving! Yes, we will want to include some cardiovascular training and improved nutrition habits to improve our composition as well. But my experience has shown that resistance training is often times the missing ingredient in most people's quest for their physical best.

### Take a Walk on the Well Side

By adding the three ingredients above, and the others we will discuss at the DMA Annual Meeting this summer, none of us need to live "Desperate Couch-Lives," resigned to watching our bodies depreciate over time. Instead, we can become "Americans Not Idle" and begin to enjoy our better and brighter "Lifestyles of the Fit & Influential!" ■

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### WANT TO LEARN MORE WELLNESS STRATEGIES?

Fred Schafer, MS, CFT will share more strategies for better health and wellness at the DMA Annual Meeting in San Diego this July. Schafer, who is president of Fit Food Dude Enterprises, will present fitness principles in an entertaining, dynamic, and encouraging style to jump-start your goal of health and wellness. His session is scheduled for Sunday, July 1.



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