A VOIDING WINTER HIBERNATION
I love this time of the year with the leaves changing colors and the cooler air moving in, which means sweaters and winter boots too. But with this change in season also comes darker and colder mornings and early evenings. And we can’t forget about the holiday hustle and bustle. It is so easy to pull out the excuses from the excuse drawer, “I don’t want to get out of bed, it’s too cold and too dark. I’m tired at the end of the day and it’s too dark anyway. I don’t have the time to exercise during the holidays. I’m too stressed out and tired to exercise this time of the year.” Put the excuses back in the drawer because I am providing MANY ways to combat those excuses. Yes, you will have to put them into action of course, but hopefully you will hear my voice when you are reaching for the snooze button saying, “DON’T DO IT! GET OUT OF BED LAZY BONES!”

TIPS TO STAY ACTIVE
Have a Plan: Working out doesn’t have to be complicated. Keep it simple. If you cannot get to the gym for some reason, have a backup plan you can do at home or in your office, such as a body weight routine that will get your heart pumping and your muscles burning or speed walk or jog around your neighborhood or campus several times. Get a jump rope. They are light, compact and cheap. Try my jump rope Tabata routine. A workout doesn’t have to take an hour or two. Mini intense sessions are GREAT to include. Fun Fact: Boredom suppresses motivation. A US study found people who vary their workouts are more than twice as likely to stick with an exercise program. Looking for something new to do? Register for my Introduction to Kettlebell class or browse through the Community Ed Spring Catalog.
The night before, PREPARE: Have everything ready to make it as easy as possible to get you out the door and moving. Set out your workout gear, water bottle, workout journal, etc.
Tune your alarm: Set the alarm to some motivating music that will get you moving and motivated to get out of bed. My two favorites are the Rocky Theme Song and Sexy and I Know It 😊
DO NOT push the snooze button: Put the alarm across the room. Once the alarm goes off, get out of bed and start moving. If you have some good music playing, you’ll probably want to start dancing your way out of bed anyway.
Create a morning routine: This is mine: I drink a 16 oz. glass of lemon water that is on my bed stand table. I go to the bathroom to splash cold water on my face and I get dressed in my workout clothes that I have set out the night before. I then go to the kitchen and sweep or put the dishes away that are in the rack. The point is, move around to wake up.

Focus on the benefits: Hibernating this time of the year is very easy to do given the cold temperatures and the dark mornings and early evenings. This is why you need to remind yourself of the benefits exercise brings you such as managing stress levels, providing more energy during the day, a sense of empowerment and strength and overall better quality of life. Write out all the benefits on a sheet of paper and post it near your alarm clock or on your computer. Read it before you go to sleep or when you get to the office.

Embrace the cold weather and the darkness: Complaining about the cold and the fact that it is so dark outside in the mornings and when you get out of work will not change it so it’s best to embrace it. Training in various conditions builds character. Wear some warm gear and get outside to enjoy the fresh brisk air. If you are uncomfortable, invest in the gear to be comfortable. Headlamps are fairly cheap. A good friend of mine has warm gloves with lights on the fingers so she can see where she is running and others can see her too. Anything is possible!

Set mini goals to stay on track: This tip goes hand in hand with your plan. Perhaps it’s the amount of miles you want to walk/jog/run weekly, the number of workouts in a week or the steady improvements in strength gains you want to accomplish in your squat or deadlift. Always write your goals down, making them specific and measurable and make them public so YOU are held accountable. Keep a workout journal to track your progress. The workout journal I am currently using dates back to January 7, 2014.

I can see how much I was squatting two years ago and compare it to now.

Find a friend(s): Ask a buddy or two to join you on the walks / jogs or workouts so you all are held accountable for showing up. Working out with a friend(s) can be more enjoyable as well. This is a great time to catch up and share!

Schedule your workouts: Just like you schedule a work meeting with your boss or colleagues, schedule your workout time. Let everyone in your office know that at 10:00 a.m. you will be going on your mid-morning walk around campus or whatever you chose to do. Make it happen and DO NOT CANCEL ON YOURSELF. Your exercise is the most important meeting you will have on a daily basis.

Reward yourself

Give one or more of these tips a try this month and see how they work for you. Remember to reward yourself for sticking to a routine with something very enjoyable like a Thai Massage (Marisa Wolfe), Foot Reflexology (Maggie Griffin), a visit to the T or C hot springs, or a nice new winter workout outfit.
**Body Weight Circuit**
This is a fun and challenging routine. Descending Ladder 10 reps to 1 rep (time is dependent on how fast you complete the ladder)
- Warm-up 2 to 5 minutes
- Exercises: Burpee, Push-ups, Squat to Heel Raise
- Cool down stretches

[Video Demo]

**Jump Rope Tabata**
This is one of my personal tabata routines. A traditional tabata is high intensity work for 20 seconds followed by 10 seconds of rest. This is repeated for 8 rounds totaling 4 minutes.
Total workout time: Between 17 and 19 minutes including rests.
Warm-up 2 to 5 minutes
**Block 1** (4 minutes total with 30 seconds to 1 minute rest)
  1. Basic Jump
  2. Jumping Jack (AKA Side Straddle)
**Block 2** (4 minutes total with 30 seconds to 1 minute rest)
  1. Scissors
  2. Play-Ground Hop
**Block 3** (4 minutes total with 30 seconds to 1 minute rest)
  1. Ski (side-to-side jumps)
  2. Bell (forward and back jumps)
**Block 4** (4 minutes total)
  1. 1 Leg Jump (R & L)
  2. High Knees
Cool down stretches

[Video Demo]

**Winter Baking Season**
During this time of the year, baking is fun because you create something yummy and heat up the house at the same time. I enjoy muffins especially with hot soup in the winter time. These savory muffins pack a punch. Eating just 1 is enough, but they are so tasty you will want to eat more.

**Savory Vegan Zucchini Muffins**
1 ½ cups almond flour
¼ cup coconut flour
1 tsp baking soda
½ tsp salt
3 eggs
¼ cup coconut oil, melted
2 tbsp almond milk
1 medium zucchini, grated
2-4 tbsp sun-dried tomatoes, diced

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Spray a muffin tin. In bowl, stir together the almond flour, coconut flour, baking soda, and salt. In a separate bowl, whisk together the eggs, coconut oil, and almond milk. Stir the wet ingredients into the dry. Fold in the zucchini and sundried tomatoes.
2. Evenly distribute the batter among 10 muffin tins. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Let cool for 5 minutes and enjoy!
(Recipe by Rebecca Bohl)

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