

A man and a woman are hiking on a gravel path in a forest. The man is on the left, wearing a light blue polo shirt, khaki shorts, and blue sneakers. The woman is on the right, wearing a red and white plaid shirt over a white tank top, blue pants, and black shoes. Both are using trekking poles. The background is a lush green forest with many trees.

PROactive Aging

3 Simple Strategies for Living Your Best Life
For As Long As You Can

by Dean Carlson, Ph2

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Why I Wrote This Report

When I first started coaching, I didn't think all that much about "Active Aging". But as a 52-year old on the front side of Generation X, it comes up a bit more in my mind now. And as a coach and personal trainer, I see more and more clients in their 40's, 50's 60's and even 70's walk through our doors.

No doubt about it. Our clients (and I) still want to look good, but more often than not we want to *feel* good, and we don't want to give up doing the active things we like doing. Who says you can't keep hiking, biking, skiing and snowboarding just because you added another number to your age? I want to keep throwing the football as far as I used too, and I am working hard to stay ahead of my 15-year old in the weight room.

At my last birthday I found myself pondering this thought:

"I know I am a year older, but I really don't FEEL any different than 10 years ago, in fact in a lot of ways I feel better. Do I really have to accept that getting older comes with unavoidable aches, pains and weight gain?"

Now don't get me wrong. I have noticed some physical changes that have come with the passing years. But they have more to do with recovery than they do with ability.

I have continued to get stronger in the gym, but the fact of the matter is I just don't bounce back from training or injury as fast as I used to. I spend more time on mobility work than I used to, and I can't pound quite as many calories as I used to and stay lean. When something gets tweaked, I am careful about addressing it, not ignoring it, confident it will eventually "go away". Part of that has to do with a little wisdom gained over the years from doing stupid things.

Many of us are at the stage of life when we see our parents starting to struggle with the aging process too, and we want to help them as well. The fact of the matter is the more proactive we are with our physical fitness and healthy eating habits now, the far better off we will be in the next 10, 20, 30 years and beyond.

I read an article recently on this subject, and this sentence caught my eye;

"It's not the number of years you live; it's how you live them." – Jennifer Broxterman

The author then wrote something that really drove the point home. It's not about **lifespan**, it's about **healthspan**. It's not how **long** you live - it's how **well** you live. That's our goal.

The Gap In Our Thinking

What is “Active Aging” anyway? In 2015 the World Health Organization actually replaced that term with “Healthy Aging”, and they define it this way:

“The process of developing and maintaining the **functional ability** that enables **wellbeing** in older age”. That’s a pretty solid definition. It’s what I like to call *PROactive Aging*.

No matter what you call it; Active Aging, Healthy Aging, Successful Aging, or Functional Aging the premise is the same to me; I want to live as actively and productively as possible, for as long as possible.

I wrote this report (finally, I know) because too often I see a gap in the way public policy addresses the issue.

The following were the topics at a recent Active Aging Conference in my local area:

Overview of Retirement and Social Security; What You Need to Know

The Basics of Memory Loss

Aging At Home

Proper Nutrition

Now to be sure those are all relevant topics in the discussion, and I was thrilled to see nutrition included.

But there are some glaring omissions I just couldn’t ignore.

It’s a conference on active aging that has absolutely no speakers on the subject of staying active – in other words keeping that body moving!

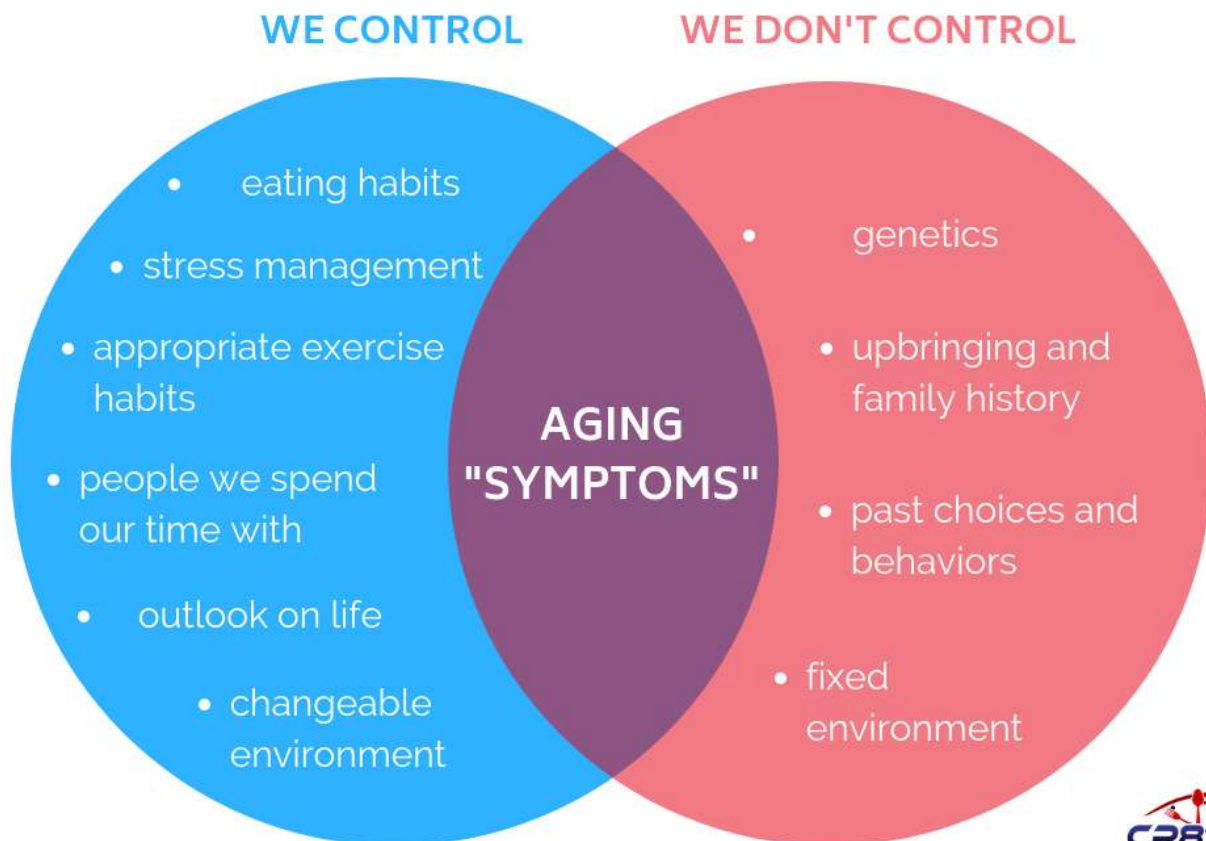
I am all for having an maintaining an active mind, but that head functions best when it’s sitting on a healthy body. And that requires physical activity. You don’t have to run marathons (actually please don’t), but you do need regular exercise and movement.

There are other strategies we need to consider and adopt as we work toward our best healthspan too:

- Stress Management
- Good Sleep Habits
- Having A Positive Outlook On Life
- Surrounding Ourselves With Positive People
- Finding Meaningful Work

And many others...

HOW WE AGE IS MORE UP TO US THAN WE MAY THINK



The bottom line is that good nutrition and lifestyle habits - regular appropriate exercise, healthy amounts of sleep, and stress management strategies, are the best tools to improve healthspan.

The good news? Those things are in your control. While we can't always change what happens to us, we do have a choice on how we are going to deal with the mess that life throws our way.

One of my favorite words is "resilience". One definition is; "the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties, toughness."

We hit the gym to build resilience in our bodies. A strong, flexible (dare I say "pliable", TB12 fans?) body is less prone to injury and recovers more quickly from injury than a detrained body.

We nourish our body with healthy foods to support that training, to promote healthy cell function, and to build a rock-solid immune system that fends off the ravages of illnesses and the stress of life.

We practice stress management, have good sleep habits, and having some fun as part of enjoying a happy, healthy life.

Resilience doesn't happen by accident. There is daily effort and struggle involved. But it is worth it.

The focus of this report (*I know, finally!*) is to show you how to turn your happy and healthy on by learning to Eat Well, Exercise Smart, and Enjoy Your Best Life.

Let's Get To It.

STRATEGY 1: EAT WELL

As we age, good nutrition is more important than ever. Getting old isn't for sissies! And as backwards as it may seem, each passing year *decreases* our energy needs, while at the same time increasing our *nutrition* needs.

What that means in the real world is we need to eat *less* calories but get *more* nutrition. Huh?

Our clients mention this common frustration all the time; "I don't eat any more food than I used to, but I am still gaining weight. It's not fair!"

It may not be fair, but it is physiology. Because of the physical and lifestyle changes that usually happen as we get older, the need for calories actually decrease.

But the thing we often miss is our **nutrition** requirements actually increase. Because of the complex changes that are happening to our metabolism, hormones and immune system, among other factors, the food we eat needs to be nutrient-dense and more easily digestible.

As we get older, our bodies metabolize what we eat differently. You probably know by now that the pop tarts, ho-ho's and twinkies you ate when you were a kid (and got away with) do some pretty ugly things now.

What you may not know is that even the good choices we put on our plates metabolizes differently, so we need to pay attention to that as well.

Here's some basic guidelines on how your macronutrient balance needs to shift.

Lean Protein

In many people, aging causes "anabolic resistance", which is when protein synthesis (how much of the good stuff our body can actually use) decreases. So what does that mean? We need to eat more to get the same effect.

The recommendation for healthy older adults (I am 52 and put myself in that category) is at least 1.0 to 1.2 grams of protein per kilogram of bodyweight per day. When you are sick, you need even more; 1.2 to 1.5 grams per kilogram of body weight per day, and if severely ill, even more.

For a person that weighs 150 lbs. (~68kg) that equals to between 80 and 100 grams per day, or 4-5 palm size servings.

The only caution is if you have or have had kidney problems. Consult with a doctor, Registered Dietician, or certified nutrition professional for appropriate amounts.

Portion Control Made Easy

PER SERVING:



PROTEIN

Women: 1 palm
Men: 2 palms



VEGETABLES

Women: 1 fist
Men: 2 fists



CARB

Women: 1 cupped hand
Men: 2 cupped hand



FAT

Women: 1 thumb
Men: 2 thumbs

Adjust portions up or down according to:

- How frequently you eat
- Your size/caloric needs
- How active you are
- Your results
- Appetite and satiety
- How frequently you eat

graphic courtesy Precision Nutrition

Quality Carbohydrates

Quality carbohydrates are the key here. I don't like to use the terms "good" and "bad" carbs, however there are high quality choices that should be our preferred source, most of the time.

Focus on vegetables first, a little fruit, and some whole grains. Note: Most of us eat too many grains because we **like** them, not because we **need** them. Even the best whole grains are calorie dense and easy to over-eat. And no, that doughnut is NOT whole grain.

Quality carbs also tend to be higher in fiber (aim for 25 grams per day), which keeps the system moving, if you know what I mean. Well-cooked root vegetable, root vegetables, fruits, and true whole grains are your best bet here. You can also take a sugar-free powdered supplement such as psyllium husk if necessary.

Healthy Fats

Fats are so important to optimum health, yet in many circles still much maligned. Fats play a primary role in regulating the inflammatory response in our body, and the kind of fat we eat makes a huge difference if that response is helping us or hurting us.

Why does inflammation matter?

Research indicates that systemic inflammation may be THE common contributing factor in just about every disease; diabetes, cancer, heart disease, even diseases of the brain such as Alzheimer's.

To lessen inflammation, eliminate trans-fat (which tend to be high in processed foods), and moderate saturated fats (eg animal fats) and low-quality omega-6 fats such as corn and soybean oil.

Replace those fats with good quality omega-6 (e.g. extra-virgin olive oil and avocado), and especially omega-3 fats (sardines, mackerel, salmon herring, anchovies, chia and hemp seeds, and walnuts). Three servings of fats from these sources should be your goal. I also recommend supplementing with a high-quality fish oil, unless you are on blood thinners, in which you should consult your doctor first.

Tip: You don't have to be a saint and remove all treats; face it, you won't anyway. And really, who wants to go through life without birthday cake? The key is to prioritize nutrient-dense foods in a balanced manner, most (like 90%) of the time. When you do that, a lot of the rest of it takes care of itself.

A Word on Alcohol

Here's my advice (and what most experts suggest).

If you don't drink alcohol already – don't start.

In spite of what you may hear in the media, the research on alcohol consumption (even moderate) is mixed.

Excess alcohol consumption is linked to health problems in about every part of your body; heart, brain, immune system, liver and kidneys, metabolism. Besides that, I guess it's ok, right?

But seriously, there are some very important functions alcohol impairs, besides your ability to drive. The body cannot store alcohol, so it always prioritizes clearing it from your system. The liver goes to work metabolizing your bourbon (or beer), and there are side effects; delay or neglect of other tasks, one of which is metabolizing fat.

That's right, the long of the short of it is while there is alcohol in your body, you aren't burning bodyfat. Doesn't matter how much you work out or how many miles you run. Until the liver is done with the booze, the fat's staying where it is.

You may also be interested in what "moderation" is.

According to the United States Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee, "moderate drinking" is:

Women: Up to 7 drinks a week, no more than 3 in one day.

Men: Up to 14 drinks a week, no more than 4 in a single day.

What is a "drink"?

- 12 oz. beer with 5% Alcohol By Volume (ABV)
- 5 oz. glass of wine; 12% ABV
- 3 oz. of fortified wine (sherry/port); 18% ABV
- 1.5 oz. of liquor (e.g. rum, rye, vodka); 40% ABV

So the old saying is right; "Think Before You Drink", and especially before you drink too much.

STRATEGY 2: EXERCISE SMART

One of the unfortunate things I see is as people get older is they stop moving. I don't mean they stop going to the gym four times a week, they hardly move at *all* anymore. And I am not talking about people in their 60's, 70's and 80's; I am seeing this with folks in their thirties. We need more movement!

The truth is that regular exercise is one of the most "bang for the buck" things we can do for our health.

As I mentioned previously, as we age (starting in our thirties) our metabolism declines and our body doesn't use the food we eat as well as it used to.

Exercising helps change all that! (Did you expect me to say anything else, being an exercise guy and all?)

Here's the deal. Exercises tells the body:

- Balance my blood sugar!
- Build and repair my muscles and bones!
- Get my circulation going and move these nutrients and oxygen to where they need to go!

In other words, exercise is really bossy, but in a really good way.

Even better, exercise is correlated with lower rates of:

- Alzheimer's and dementia
- Diabetes
- Heart Disease
- Obesity
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Fatigue (true story!)
- Overall Mortality

Add onto all that disease-fighting goodness with the fact that exercise improves mood and well-being, and there is no doubt you NEED exercise in your life. When you make it social, like exercising with a friend or training in group classes, the mood modifying power of exercise is unmatched.

At Cr8 Fitness, we talk about "appropriate exercise", and that means different things for different people.

If you have not exercised in a while, you are going to need strategies that promote mobility, flexibility, and especially injury prevention. The good news is that as you exercise more, and your body gets stronger, you build resiliency and are able to tolerate more and higher level activities. I would be remiss if I didn't promote getting a good coach to guide you on this "appropriate exercise" journey, especially if you haven't exercised in a long time or have or have had injuries.

Here are some tips:

Ease into your new exercise program:

It's a really big deal to get back in the gym, and sometimes we are so gung-ho that the next day we are so sore we can't move. I've been there. A good program will start you appropriately (there's that word again) and progress you as your ability increases.

Keep things in perspective:

Exercise intensity is a subjective matter. Too be blunt, a 25-year old trainer has no idea what a 50, or 60, or 70-year-old feels like during, before, and after exercise. What “moderate to vigorous” looks like to them may be far different than what it looks (and feels) like to you. If they are a good trainer, that may not matter. But having two experienced coaches over the age of fifty here does have its benefits. And we can still kick most 25-year old butts to boot!

Find some fun in your exercise routine:

The two key factors in finding success in your fitness program are consistency, and fun. If you aren't having fun with your exercise routine you aren't going to be very consistent with it, at least not for long. That doesn't mean every day is going to be sunshine, unicorns and rainbows; exercise is hard! But when you are in an enjoyable environment, with people that care about, want to help you, and miss you when you are gone **does** make all the difference.

It's Much More Fun... When You're With Someone



STRATEGY 3: ENJOY LIFE

Is it just me, or is this just an unhappy world? Seriously, life is too short for that. And while there is no doubt there is a lot of things that can cause our perspective to be soured, it's really important for our health that we proactively encourage some happy in our lives.

Here are two things that affect our "happy-healthy" state of mind, and that we do exercise control over.

Stress Management

When you hear the word "stress", what comes to mind? I'll admit when I think of stress, the first thing that pops into my mind is "bad – go away".

In reality, stress is a normal physiological response to events that we feel threatened by or knock us off balance in some way. You have heard the term "fight or flight". When something threatens us physically, mentally or emotionally we go on high alert.

That is the stress response; it is natural and is designed to protect us. Not all stress is bad, in fact stress does some very good things. It can keep us alert in dangerous situations, increase concentration when we need it most, and keep us sharp during high pressure situations.

It is also true that beyond a certain point stress no longer is your friend, and becomes an enemy to your health, mood, productivity and relationships. When we are on stress overload, it just plain "saps our happy".

And "overload" is exactly the right word. **Allostatic Load** is the cumulative wear and tear on your body – physical, mental, and emotional – that results from stress, especially chronic stress. We really can only take so much, like the proverbially "straw that broke the camel's back". That's why when we are reaching our threshold little things can set us off. It wasn't the fact that your 15-year old told you last minute (again) that he needed his permission slip signed as you were trying to get out the door, it was all the **other** stuff that has been piling up that caused you to blow your top. (That might have been a true autobiographical story).

Fun Fact: Allostatic Load can be measured via your Heart Rate Variability (HRV). This is a simple 2- or 3-minute process using a heart rate monitor and your smartphone. I have monitored my HRV every morning for about six years now, and some of our clients do as well. The point? If my HRV indicates I am reaching threshold, I know I have to focus on my recovery efforts.

Good and Bad Stress

Good stress is also called **eustress**. This stress moves us move out of our comfort zone, learn, grow and get stronger.

Coach Nancy loves rollercoasters. To her they are fun, exciting, and exhilarating. It's short term and leaves her energized and wanting more. That's an example of good stress.

GOOD STRESS vs. BAD STRESS

GOOD STRESS

- ✔ Over quickly
- ✔ Infrequent
- ✔ Inspires you to action

BAD STRESS

- ✘ Lasts a long time
- ✘ Is chronic
- ✘ Demoralizes you

POSITIVE RESPONSE

- ✔ Keeps you focused and alert
- ✔ Energizing and motivating
- ✔ Encourages healthy exploration outside your comfort zone
- ✔ Balanced rest and recovery
- ✔ Learn, grow, get stronger

NEGATIVE RESPONSE

- ✘ Causes you distraction
- ✘ Worried and anxious
- ✘ Stifles creativity, you don't want another challenge
- ✘ Sleep patterns disrupted
- ✘ Possible muscle loss, fat gain



Exercise is another good example. Appropriate exercise is hard work, but also leaves you feeling good, even energized like the rollercoaster (after your heart rate comes down and you can breathe again, of course).

Conversely, I am **not** a fan of rollercoasters. Going up to the edge of a cliff, hanging there, and then plunging into the unknown in a seemingly uncontrolled fashion does not make me feel energized, not one bit.

This is bad stress, what we call **distress**.

So how do you tell the difference between good stress and bad stress?

There is no “one-size-fits-all” when dealing with stress. We all react to different stressors, well, differently. What distinguishes good stress from bad stress is in your life is not actually the specific stressor itself, but your personal ability to recover from it.

Here are some factors that contribute to our stress response and recovery ability:

- Our attitude and outlook on life. Optimists generally live longer than pessimists.
- Our personal life experiences. How stress was modeled to us can be a huge factor how we respond.
- Our perception of how much we control the situation. Feeling trapped can paralyze us and leave us hopeless.
- Our friends and family. Knowing we are loved and cared for is a difference maker. Hanging out with people we like to be around just makes sense.
- Our physical environment. Wide open spaces, nature, and places we like to be automatically reduces our tension level. I don't like crowds; some people thrive in them. Again, it's highly personal.
- Our allostatic load. The more we are dealing with at once, the harder it is to keep our head cool and our body healthy. Cumulative stress is highly damaging to even the most positive and cheery of us.

I know I keep emphasizing allostatic load, and it's for a couple reasons. The first thing to remember is that *everything* contributes to it: physical, mental and emotional. Your crazy high electric bill, your crazy boss, your fuel light flickering on empty, and yes, even that great workout you just had goes on the pile. The other reason it keeps coming up is because you can measure it, scientifically, so you are reminded to actually **do** something about it.

So what do we do about it?

Understanding how to manage stress is key to living in the sweet spot, where stress is inspiring and energizing rather than demoralizing and demotivating.

The opposite of “fight or flight” is “rest and digest”. Your central nervous system needs some love to, and recovery activities help build that resilience that is so important to develop.

Here are some proven ways to help you find that sweet spot, reduce your allostatic load, and be your most productive and happiest self:

- Get some sunshine (especially here in the north. Get your Vitamin D level checked too
- Go outside and do activity you enjoy; walk, bike, hike
- Listen to relaxing music
- Get a massage
- Sauna or hot tub
- Practice breathing exercises (deep breathing)
- Laugh more
- Deep breathing
- Practice mindfulness
- Physical play
- Exercise

A word on electronics; while movies and television can be entertaining, they are also stimulating to the central nervous system, and adding to your allostatic load. As challenging as it may be, true stress reduction and recovery means ditching the screens. Leave the phone in the car. The world won't explode.

You don't have to shoot for “stress-free”

It's not possible, and as we learned, we need some stress to be at our most inspired, productive and happy. But stress won't manage itself, and you won't be great at it right away if you are just adopting these strategies. Don't stress about it (ha) – just adopt some simple strategies you can do right now to reduce your stress load.

“Stress ages you faster” is not just a pithy saying. It's reality. Stress management is a must for successful aging and staying at your best, longer.

Strong Sleep

You are hitting the gym regularly, and you're eating habits are trending in the right direction (see above). Yet someone you still don't feel great, and you just don't look or feel like you want to. It's time to ask yourself if you are a "stinky sleeper".

4 SIGNS YOUR SLEEP STINKS

YOU NEED "ONE MORE COFFEE" - FIVE TIMES A DAY

An excess need for stimulants (like caffeine) to stay sharp and alert is a slippery slope. Too much period is thought to cause "adrenal fatigue", which requires more and more to get the same effect. Too much too late in the day disrupts sleep patterns, regardless of the amount of sleep you get.

YOU GET SICK, A LOT

When we don't get enough sleep our immune system gets compromised. Disease fighting cell production goes down, inflammation goes up, you get sick. Long-term sleep deprivation contributes to an increased risk of heart and other inflammation related diseases.

YOU CAN'T LOSE WEIGHT

Poor sleep disrupts appetite-regulation, causing you to feel hungrier and eat more. Excess body fat can also reduce sleep quality, so it's a two-edged sword.

YOU JUST ARE NOT VERY HAPPY

Sleep is like a happy drug. Every night fresh neurotransmitters are produced and our hormone production re-balanced. When that doesn't happen, our stress levels go up, our mood goes down, and your spouse tells you to go away.



Good sleep doesn't happen by accident. Just like anything worth doing, it's going to require effort and practice.

Here are some tips for shaking that stinky sleep habit and setting yourself up for success:

Get Up Right Away

Hitting the "snooze" bar just once never seems to happen. The longer you stay in the bed, the harder to get up. Sit Up. Feet On The Floor. Stand Up. Better sleep at night starts first thing in the morning.

Find The Sun

Immediate natural light exposure regulates your melatonin. This helps us be awake fully in the day, ready to sleep at night.

Exercise Appropriately

Regulate your inner clock, reduce your stress, optimize your hormones. Plus, you look and feel better!

Eat A Moderate Dinner

Too much food makes it harder to sleep. Enough said.

Download Your Day

Clear your mind; writing things down gets them out of your head. Planning the next day at night helps you not think about them when you're trying to get some shut eye.

Creating and practicing a nightly routine is key. Here are some actions steps:

Turn off the electronics at least 30 minutes before bed. TV, Computer, Cell Phone, all of it. Artificial light interferes with melatonin production, which is required for deep and maximum restorative sleep.

Take a warm bath or shower. Magnesium based bath salts are known to help with sleep.

Your bedroom should be reserved for two things only; sleep and sex. A television in the bedroom is a sleep strangler. Keep your bedroom as your Fortress of Solitude; quiet, relaxed and peaceful (at least until Lex Luthor crashes the party).

Experiment with room temperature. For most people 67 degrees or so seems to work best. Start there and adjust what works for you.

The room should be dark, as in pitch black. Any and all light interferes with the sleep cycle. If you don't want to trip on the way to the bathroom, use a motion-detecting night light.

A little tough love here.

Your health is worth missing an episode of your favorite TV show. I love watching football as much as anyone, but I discovered that teams don't need me to watch to win. (I know, I was bummed when I found out). Of course, there are exceptions; I am going to watch the Super Bowl, and if the Red Sox are

in the World Series, I am there. But my habit is to go to bed and get at least seven hours of sleep a night. I get up at 4:00am on training morning, so you do the math. Jimmy Fallon and I never cross paths.

While it's true that our sleep requirements go down as we age (From 9-11 hours when we are school age to 7-8 hours at 65+) we still need enough sleep. While there are outliers that our fine with less than that, the overwhelming odds are you are not one of those special flowers. Seven hours a night will keep you functioning at peak performance, regardless of the date on your birth certificate.

Conclusion

Dylan Thomas wrote; "**Do not go gentle into that good night, Old age should burn and rave at close of day; Rage, rage against the dying of the light.**"

I am not on some Quixotic quest for immortality. But I am not averse to a little "raging" either.

You don't have to settle. I loved my grandfather very much. And I distinctly remember that when he was 70 he almost never got out of his chair, because he couldn't. I remember as a kid thinking how old 70 must be. That is not a criticism of my granddad. He was a hard-working man who was a product of his generation, a proud generation. We know more about the aging process now than he did then. We know smoking and excess alcohol ravages the mind and body and ages you faster. We have better medicine and more opportunity. But *knowing* and *doing* are two very different things.

It's up to us to take advantage of the boundless resources we have in front of us and make the best choices we can to live an active and healthy life.

Let's Do This!

Need Help Getting Started?

About Cr8 Fitness

Cr8 Fitness mission is to help turn our clients "Happy and Healthy" on by Coaching them to Eat Well, Exercise Smart, and Enjoy Their Best Life.

We are a small facility tucked into the heart of the Suncook Valley, family-owned and operated for over 10 years. Each of our clients is family to us, and we are their fitness home.

Our heart is to create a safe, fun, and happy environment where you get the personal attention to reach your health and fitness goals. Please visit our website at <https://Cr8Fitness.com> or call **603.340.7852** for your complimentary fitness screen and 2-Week Free Tryout.

About Coach Nancy



Getting started is most often the challenging part of losing weight and staying fit. Life is busy, and setting time aside to “work out” is simply one more thing to add to the list.

As a mom of six, with a high maintenance husband (look left), I have this challenge as well. To be honest, I am a work in progress. I believe this is part of what makes a good trainer – the ability to relate to clients. I truly understand the need to integrate an exercise program into a busy lifestyle without neglecting other responsibilities.

I can relate to late nights and early mornings due to a baby in the house or a sick preschooler. I understand relaxing my food standards at the Fourth of July picnic and at Christmas. And I understand being mentally exhausted to the point that I don’t even want to THINK about training.

But I’ve learned not to throw up my hands and give in to the frustration. I want to share this determination and enthusiasm with you. It is not only possible to reach your fitness goals – it will happen! I am living proof. I may not be Mrs. Fitness USA yet, but I have reached goals that others said were simply not possible after having six kids and crossing the big 4-0.

My passion is teaching and coaching others to think big and reach high. It takes work – hard work – but I am committed to helping you reach your fitness goals and getting in the best shape of your life!

Nancy Carlson is a Certified Professional Fitness Trainer with the National Exercise and Sports Trainer Association, a Level 1 Youth Conditioning Specialist with the International Youth Conditioning Association, and is a Level 2 Certified Precision Nutrition Master coach.

Nancy was recognized in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018 as “Best of” Fitness Trainer in Southern NH by the Hippo Press.

About Coach Dean



What makes a good physical preparation coach? A passion for helping people train, not only their bodies, but also their minds. I have a deep desire to help people break out of perceived limitations and achieve their goals. I would like to help move them along the path from “I can’t” to “I DID!” A good coach does not try to motivate, but rather to inspire a trainee to find the drive within himself to do what he didn’t think was possible.

My decision to become a nutrition coach and trainer began through my own journey to good health and fitness. I was actually too thin in high school but played sports which kept me reasonably fit. My tour in the Army did the same.

It was after the Army that I ballooned to over 260 pounds. My blood sugar was too high and I was out of energy all the time; the classic symptoms of being overweight and unhealthy. When Nancy and I started our family, the realization hit me that if something didn’t change, my children could be without a dad at very young ages. It was this reality check that has led to a stronger, healthier, leaner and much more fit me: 185 pounds and feeling GREAT!

I now have the privilege of sharing my passion with others. Whether you are an athlete striving for better performance, a frustrated dieter who wants to get off the diet roller coaster or somewhere in-between, my dedication to health and happiness means the one who deserves my best coaching skills is you!

Dean Carlson is a Level 2 Certified Precision Nutrition Master coach, a certified Functional Aging Specialist through The Functional Aging Institute, and a Level 2 Youth Conditioning Specialist with the International Youth Conditioning Association. He also holds instructor certifications with TRX, Kettlebell Athletics, and Training for Warriors.

Dean was recognized in 2010, 2012 and 2013 as Best Fitness Trainer in Concord by the Hippo Press and in 2010 as Best Fitness Trainer in the Capital Area by the Concord Insider.