**FITNESS FOR MOMS WHO HAVE LOST HOPE**

Have you lost hope that you will ever be fit again? Don’t despair. No matter how un-fit you feel today, you’re going to be able to attain fitness again. You’re going to look better and feel better than you ever dreamed possible.

You may have tried to lose weight before, but aren’t satisfied with your results. Maybe you feel you aren’t making progress fast enough. If you lose a few pounds, you find that you gain them back twice as fast as you lost them. Or you may set resolutions only to find that it seems impossible to stick to a routine. Being a mother includes a lot of demands, often when you least expect them. You might feel like you don’t have time to exercise, or to think about eating right. Even though you plan to exercise each day, somehow you don’t seem to get to it.

Don’t give up! No matter how many times you have tried to lose weight before, you can still succeed.

**What Motivates You?**

In order to succeed at getting fit, you need to figure out what motivates you to stick to your fitness goals. What are the triggers that make you reach for an extra fistful of cookies? By contrast, what inspires you to say no to extra calories and yes to healthy foods and exercise?

The trick is getting in touch with the things that lead you to make choices, right or wrong. We’re presented with literally hundreds of choices each day. The secret of attaining the level of fitness you are striving for is to make good choices much more often than you make bad choices.

Some people are motivated by encouragement from friends and family members, while others are more inspired by hearing others say that they don’t believe you can do it. Are you the kind of person that binges on junk food when someone tells you that you can’t lose weight, or are you the kind of person that says “I’ll show you!” when others express doubt?

If you’re the kind of person who thrives on encouragement, surround yourself with other people who are also trying to make good fitness choices. Find a fitness buddy and compare what’s working with each other.

**Finding the Reasons to Stick to a Fitness Plan**

Sometimes the best way to get motivated and stay motivated is to write down exactly what your fitness goals are, and then make a list of reasons why it’s important for you to meet them.

Do you know exactly what your goals are? Vaguely saying you want to lose weight isn’t a goal. Knowing exactly what size you’re shooting for or how many pounds you intend to lose helps to make it much clearer in your mind. Hang up a slinky dress or bikini that you can’t wait to wear and visualize yourself in it.

If you can’t picture yourself slender, there is a website that can help you. Visit <http://makeovr.com/weightmirror/> and use the visualization tool to see what you would look like at your desired weight. Visualize yourself at that weight several times a day. Remind yourself when you reach for a second helping that you are making it much less likely you’re going to attain your goal.

Now think about *why* you should stick to a fitness plan. Reasons to get fit include increased energy, looking more attractive to your mate and increased self-esteem. But as a mom it goes deeper than that. Deciding to get fit is not just about you now. Sure you want to look better, and you want to fit into pre-pregnancy clothes. You want to wow your former schoolmates at high school reunions.

But as a mom you have a responsibility to your children to be healthy. You are setting an example for them of habits that they will carry forward in their own lives. Whether you realize it or not, your children are watching you all the time and mimicking a lot of what you do. You don’t want to be the mom who teaches them that a fistful of chocolate will solve all their problems.

Being a mom requires a good amount of energy. Having the energy needed to keep up with your kids comes from making healthy food choices and staying active. Remember that you’re never going to do this perfectly. Work toward making good choices each and every day.