



# **Your Aspyre Fitness Fat Loss Action Plan**



## **It's Time to Start Taking Care of YOU**

The guide that you are about to read is first and foremost about YOU.

It is a useful guide to self-improvement. Specifically, the principles you will find in this guide will help you achieve the **LASTING FAT LOSS** you have long dreamed about.

What will you need to be successful with this fat loss guide? Just one thing:

**A POSITIVE, DRIVEN MINDSET**

If you are committed to being successful, this guide will help you get to where you want to be.

We will teach you how to plan for fat loss, but it is ultimately up to you to **TAKE ACTION!**

So, without further delay, let's learn how to come up with a successful fat loss plan...

## Table of Contents

It's Time to Start Taking Care of YOU	2
Table of Contents	3
Planning for Fat Loss	4
5 Quick Short Cuts to Fat Loss Success	6
The 6 Level Pyramid of Goals	6
A Note on Goal Setting: How to Set S.M.A.R.T. Goals	9
Setting Goals and Taking Action: The Value of "Why"	10
A Guide to Getting Things Done	12
Reminder Systems	13
Attitude and Social Support	14
Injury Prevention	15
Eating Advice: Consistency is King	18
Sleep: The Final Frontier	19
Hold Yourself Accountable with: A Weekly Review	19

## Planning for Fat Loss

Now that you have some general time management skills and a guide to setting goals for yourself, it is time to put it all together into a fat loss plan.

### 1. Define Purpose

- You know that you want to lose weight, but at first it is a very nebulous concept. How much weight do you want to lose? Why do you want to do so? Is it for health reasons? Cosmetic reasons? Both?

Knowing the reasons why you want to lose weight and establishing firm goals is the first step in any fat loss plan.

### 2. Envision Outcomes

- Now that you have an idea as to what you're setting out to achieve, it is a good time to visualise the process and the end results. Take a moment to envision what your life will be like if you are to be dedicated to this goal of losing weight.

You should think about it from a variety of angles. First, imagine how much healthier and more energetic you will be once you start working out, eating right, and melting fat. Second, think about the good example you will be setting for your wife, kids, friends, and other loved ones.

While envisioning positive outcomes can be a great motivational technique, you should still take the time to envision negative ones. Could you see yourself eating fast food on nights where you stay at work late? Could you become beleaguered by having too many responsibilities on top of your work out goals? Imagining potential negative outcomes is the first step towards developing safeguards against them.

### 3. Identify Limits

- If you are new to fat loss, chances are you're not quite prepared to run 5km, bench press 200kgs, or perform an intense metabolic circuit program.

But guess what? That's perfectly normal!

Everyone has limits. For most, these limits are physical. Perhaps your body cannot handle the stress of certain types of workouts. Maybe you have an injury that needs attention before you can take off in the weight room.

Still other limits are time related. Most of us are busy with our jobs, families, and other commitments. Identify what time limits you may have, and take steps to ensure that you still are able to work out and eat right regularly.

#### 4. Organise and Take Action

- Now that you have defined your purpose, envisioned good and bad outcomes, and identified your limits, it's time to start taking action. First, develop an action plan. Much like goals, actions can be short-term or long-term. Long-term actions generally consist of acquiring habits and consistent behaviours.

Of course, you must start on a smaller scale. Developing any habit takes that first step. Perhaps you have an action plan in place to eat healthy. In this case, drinking 8 glasses of water on Tuesday is a concrete action step you must take. Doing it the next day, the day after, and so on will eventually turn it into a long-term habit that needs less overt planning.

#### 5. Reflect and Re-evaluate

- After you have performed all of the preceding steps, you should take some time to reflect on the actions you have taken and the process that led to them. Were your efforts successful or not? If not, what could you have done differently?

Socrates is credited as saying that “the unexamined life is not worth living.” The same is true of any fat loss plan. If you do not assess and review it, there is no way for you to know if you could be even more successful.

## **5 Quick Short Cuts to Fat Loss Success**

1. Decide on goals and write them down
2. Establish a support system
3. Keep a food journal
4. Eat Breakfast! (high fibre, high protein)
5. Exercise 3X per week

## **The 6 Level Pyramid of Goals**

Every person in life has a unique set of goals, and most people measure their success by their ability to see these goals through to completion.

While you certainly have a good idea about what a goal is, what many people fail to recognise is that goals can often be grouped together on the basis of how long it will take to achieve them.

If your goal is to save up enough money for retirement, it is most certainly not a failure if you haven't done so after merely one year of working. Saving for retirement is not something that can be accomplished in a day, a month, or even a year. It is a **LIFETIME GOAL**.

Fitness goals are no different. Some are very short term (i.e. exercising on that particular night). Some are long-term; for example, dropping 20kgs by the end of the year. Of course, some are very long term (maintaining good health as you age, for instance).

By understanding what category your particular goals fall into, you can plan accordingly.

To illustrate the different types of goals you most likely have, you can think of them as grouped into a 6 level pyramid.

At the bottom of the pyramid are your short-term, immediate goals. For nearly everybody, the bulk of our goals are comprised of the immediate work before us. This extends to every domain of life: driving the kids to school, cooking dinner, working out, taking your spouse out for a night on the town, etc.

You could probably fill page after page with all of the tasks you have to complete in the short-term.

As you move up each level of the pyramid, your goals start to become more all-encompassing. If you are to lose 20kgs in a year, achieving that goal will be the end result of achieving many more short-term goals (for example, completing your workout tonight, completing your 3 workouts next week, etc.).

It should start to become evident that, like a pyramid, the structure is only as solid as its foundation. If you are to one day achieve all of your long-term goals, it will require you to set and meet a series of shorter-term ones.

The only way to get to the top of the pyramid – or in our case, a goal of lifelong health – you must, of course, start at the bottom:

### **Level 1: Immediate Actions**

These immediate actions are the bulk of your tasks (not just in health and fitness, but in life). You know what they are... and you also know how daunting they can seem.

Immediate actions are not quite goals. They are, in effect, the simple tasks that arise every day. For instance, you may have a workout tonight at 6pm. Driving to the gym and completing your workout will knock this immediate task off of your to-do list.

By completing these immediate tasks, you are building a foundation of success. The best way to do this is through reminders (i.e. a day planner) and holding yourself accountable by reviewing whether or not you completed the tasks in your planner.

### **Level 2: Short-Term Goals and Projects**

Anyone trying to lose fat should set short-term goals for him or herself. These goals might range from completing a 4 week workout program to carrying out a weekly meal plan. Generally, these short-term goals should not last longer than a month or two.

### **Level 3: Responsibilities**

This level comprises the different categories your short-term goals belong to. These include such things as work, home, finances, family, and health commitments.

Becoming physically fit is just one part of your responsibilities to your health... and an important part. Of course, being healthy also includes getting yearly health checkups, dental appointments, etc.

Understanding that each of your short term goals is part of something bigger can clear your head and keep you focused on the real reasons you are doing what you are doing on a daily basis.

#### **Level 4: 1 to 2 Year Goals**

These goals might best be classified as medium-term goals. Do you want to lose 50 pounds or finally look good in a bikini in time for next summer?

Chances are you will not be able to accomplish these goals in a matter of a couple of days, weeks, or months. However, setting a realistic timetable for achieving such a goal could keep you working toward it, rather than losing sight of it.

#### **Level 5: 3 to 5 Year Goals**

We've all heard the question asked before: "Where do you see yourself in 5 years?"

In all fairness, this question is probably asked so often because it is crucially important. Who you are today is most likely not who you will be 5 years from now. Perhaps 5 years from now you see yourself getting promoted, buying a new house, or sending the kids to college. Such long-term visions require planning and steady execution.

Naturally, the same goes for your health and fitness goals. While your journey may begin with the small, immediate steps before you, you should try to envision yourself in 5 years and what kind of health you would like to have.

#### **Level 6: Lifetime Goals**

Each of us only has a certain amount of time on this Earth, and it is important to make the most of it.

Over the course of your life, you probably want to eventually save up enough to retire and live comfortably. For many people, raising children and grandchildren is a fundamental part of life.

Never neglect your health when considering the overall course of your life. As you age, it will be harder and harder to achieve good health if you have not started to make any progress toward that goal.

While it may seem a long ways off, remember that the action steps you take today – whether they are positive or negative for your health – could have an enormous impact on your life for the years to come.

## **A Note on Goal Setting: How to Set S.M.A.R.T. Goals**

As the previous sections of this manual can attest, goals are one of the most significant components of executing a successful fat loss plan. Simply put, you must be able to set goals.

Yet, many people set themselves up for failure by failing to craft goals that they can actually achieve. The point of a goal is not to make a grand statement just to say something that sounds important. The point of a goal is to motivate you to reach a specific milestone.

### **Ambiguous Goals Yield Ambiguous Results**

The biggest problem most people have when it comes to goal-setting is listing out goals that are hard to measure. If you're reading this, chances are you want to burn fat. Well, it is not enough to say that your goal is to "burn fat." While it may be correct in a literal sense, it will not motivate you to reach a specific milestone.

### **Goals Should Motivate**

One of the primary reasons for setting a goal in the first place is to motivate you to get out and exercise. If you have a goal in place, it makes working out easier because you have an end point in mind.

Saying that you want to burn fat is not a good goal because it doesn't motivate. Instead, having a goal like "dropping a dress/pants size" motivates because you can keep working hard until you see the tangible result.

### **Performance-Based vs. Outcome-Based vs. Habit-Based Goals**

These are the three types of goals. Outcome-based goals are important in a general sense. They are the end result you are hoping to achieve after putting in the hard work. Outcome-based goals are goals like "dropping a pants size" or "losing 10 kgs." The goal is to attain a specific outcome.

Habit and performance-based goals are much more important to the actual process of losing weight, and should be your main focus at the beginning. A habit-based goal is the type of goal that leads to “doing.” For instance, a good goal to have could be “I will get 8 hours of sleep.” This type of goal will help you repeat certain positive actions.

A performance-based goal involves numbers. This is a goal such as “I will bench press 75kgs in two weeks.” The goal here is to be able to complete a specific task at a certain level of performance.

## **Getting SMART**

You can easily remember what makes a goal a good goal by remembering the acronym **SMART**.

**S**pecific: “I will work out at 6pm” is specific. “I will work out” is not.

**M**easurable: “I will bench press 75kgs” vs. “I will lift weights”

**A**ttainable/**R**ealistic: “I will lose 20kgs in 1 year” vs. “I will lose 20kgs by the end of the week”

**T**imely: “I will eat a healthy dinner tonight” vs. “I will start eating healthy eventually”

## **Setting Goals and Taking Action: The Value of “Why”**

When you are setting goals or charting out a course of action, asking the question “why?” is something most people overlook.

Yes, we all want to burn fat, eat healthier, and live better lives. However, it can be easy to lose sight of our goals if we have no sense of purpose driving us forward.

That is why I recommend always taking that extra moment to ask yourself: “Why am I doing this?” “Why do I want this?” etc.

Here is what asking “why?” does:

### **Creates a Definition for Success**

If you are going to put time and energy into something, you need to have a purpose. Without a defined sense of what it means to be successful, people often lose motivation to continue. When you ask why something is important to you, your answer creates the criteria by which you judge success.

For example, let's say you come up with a goal: "I want to lose 3kgs in a month."

By asking yourself why this goal is important to you, you can create a clearly defined reason for pursuing it. Whatever your answer is (to look better, to drop a dress size in time for vacation in Fiji, etc.) will be something you can turn to when you question why you're working so hard in the gym.

### **Narrows Focus and Gathers Resources**

Imagine you give yourself the following goal: "I will work out 3 days this week for half an hour."

By asking why you are doing this action, you can begin to think about all of the resources that you must put into achieving it. Perhaps the answer is that you want to work out, but don't have much time. Now that you have your answer to "why," you know that time is a precious resource. As such, you can begin to manage your time by organising it in such a way that you give yourself time to accomplish this goal.

Asking "why?" also narrows your focus, especially in relation to longer term goals. Perhaps your goal is to lose 20kgs in a year. When you ask "why," you focus in on the forces driving this major life change. Perhaps you want to avoid health issues or want to look great in time for your wedding. Whatever the answer, you will have a clear focus moving forward.

### **Motivates**

Lastly, understanding why you're doing what you're doing is a great way to stay motivated.

Let's say you have the following action step in place: "Drink a glass of water instead of a can of soda whenever you crave soda."

Over the course of a week, you may know what action you're supposed to be taking, but without asking yourself "why" you are taking that action, you could very well lose motivation to do it.

Instead, when you ask "why," you can create a list of all the reasons you should skip that can of soda: "I'm trying to lose 5kgs... The sugar in soda will undermine my other diet efforts... I need to stay hydrated for my workout... and so on."

Having something to lean on when bad habits and doubt start to creep in can be the difference between being motivated and successful or being apathetic and unsuccessful.

## **A Guide to Getting Things Done**

How do you take action? It's not always so simple, especially when it comes to changing your life and instilling new habits.

Typically, getting things done – new things that you aren't used to doing – requires a series of steps from planning through execution.

### **Step 1: Collect Information**

First you have to start with a little bit of reconnaissance. Do a self-inventory. What are you currently doing? How are your current behaviours affecting your health for better and worse?

After establishing that certain behaviours need changing, seek out ways to change them. Find an exercise program and diet guide that works for you.

### **Step 2: Get It off Your Mind and Into a System**

Many people fail to take action on their goals and desires simply because they feel overwhelmed. More likely than not, you have many responsibilities going on at once right now and have a hard time keeping track of them all.

There is no need to feel overwhelmed. The best way to get all of your responsibilities off your mind is to organise your thoughts and write them down.

Write down what you have to do, list a desired outcome, and note any next steps to take. It is also important to set up reminders.

For example, let's say you want to find time to work out this week. You may be struggling to do so because you keep thinking about everything else you have going on: packing for that business trip, cooking dinner, etc.

By writing down all of the various tasks you have to do, you can begin to put them into a system.

### **Step 3: A Time and a Place for All Things**

Now that you have all of your major tasks written down, put them into your schedule. Picking a specific time of day to work out will make you less likely to worry about it because you know that it has its own time to occur.

Organising your life in such a manner will leave with a clearer mind to more effectively carry out all of your undertakings.

Furthermore, when you have a reminder system in place, you don't have to worry about uncompleted tasks until you get a reminder to do so.

#### **Step 4: Take Action**

Now that you have a system in place and a reminder to perform the task, the last step is just to do it!

### **Reminder Systems**

Every plan – no matter what theory is behind it – exists on a day to day practical level. As such, I want to use this space to briefly offer up a few good “Reminder Systems” you can use to make sure that you remember when to take action and what action to take.

#### **Google Calendar**

In the information age, many of us are constantly tethered to our laptops, smartphones, tablets, and other electronic devices. Google Calendar is a great reminder system for anyone who prefers to do the bulk of their work online.

To use it, you must have an account with Google. Within the calendar itself, you can set up events to take place on particular days and times.

For example, perhaps you want to plan out your meals for the week and make sure that you take the appropriate actions to carry out this plan. At the beginning of the week, you can enter each meal into each day at whatever time you want to designate as breakfast, lunch, or dinner. You can have Google Calendar send you an email reminder ahead of time (30min before, 2hr before, etc.). In the description for each meal, you can include all of the foods you will be eating.

#### **Day Planner**

For the less tech dependent of us, a physical day planner is often more than adequate... provided that you keep it in an accessible place and remember to use it daily.

#### **Dry-Erase Calendar**

While online calendars have many benefits, there is nothing quite like having a large, tangible calendar displayed in a prominent place in your home or office. Make sure to place it somewhere that you will be sure to notice it, so as to not wind up ignoring it.

### **Minimize!**

While the 3 options listed above are all great in their own ways, it is unnecessary to rely upon more than one of them for your daily planning needs. In fact, having some information stored in one location and other information stored in a different location could wind up being very confusing. I recommend you choose whichever option works best for you and rely on it as a central database for all of your daily actions steps.

## **Attitude and Social Support**

It has been said that whether you think you can or think you can't, you are right.

While it is perhaps a cliché, it is still very much true. You can sabotage your goal of achieving long term fat loss if you approach losing weight with a bad attitude.

People who tell themselves how hard losing weight is or who don't believe that diet and exercise will work for them usually are quicker to give up whenever they encounter a roadblock.

At the same time, a positive attitude can make all the difference. There will undoubtedly be days along your journey when you want to abandon your healthy eating plan or skip your workouts. There may come a time when you step on the scale and find that you haven't lost as much weight as you had hoped you would.

A positive attitude, however, will always keep you moving in the right direction. Believing in yourself is perhaps the single most important thing you can do. Sure, you have to have a plan, you have to be willing to work hard, and so on, but you will fail if you tell yourself that you will fail.

### **Social Support**

To go along with belief in yourself, it is nearly as important to surround yourself with people who also believe in you.

Imagine two scenarios. In one, your "friends" and "loved ones" all undermine your efforts to lose weight and make fun of you for trying to improve yourself (probably out of jealousy or spite).

In the other, your friends and family support your goals, encourage you to eat healthy and exercise, and maybe even exercise with you when you need a training partner.

Now, it may not be impossible to burn fat and maintain healthy life habits in the first situation, it should be clear that it is easier in the second.

It has been suggested that you are the average of the 5 people they spend the most time with. Think hard about the people you surround yourself with. Do your friends value a healthy lifestyle? Will they encourage your new lifestyle habits?

It may be tough, but if it is worth it to you to lose weight, then finding the right support network is certainly worthwhile.

## **Injury Prevention**

As the famous poet said, “The best laid plans of mice and men often go awry.”

Do not believe for one second that a great workout program alone guarantees success. The success that you experience from any workout plan will be the direct result of your ability to actually carry it out.

One of the biggest obstacles that often gets in the way of carrying out said workout plans is injury.

Injury can derail even the most committed exercisers, and often times can leave a lingering impact that makes it difficult for you to return to the level you had reached prior to becoming injured.

Every exercise, sport, and activity carries with it its own unique set of risks and possibilities for injury.

In a sport like rugby, for example, you will be much more likely to suffer a concussion than in other sports.

While you can certainly get concussions from a variety of activities, it is always wise to take precautions against injuries that are common to people performing whatever exercise you have chosen.

With that in mind, I want to provide you with some general guidelines for injury prevention that will be applicable in almost any situation you find yourself in. Bear in mind: this list is not exhaustive, and you may need to take special precautions depending on the exercise you are performing (i.e. wear a helmet when you ski!)

## **Get a Physical:**

If you are new to exercising – or if you haven't had a checkup in a while – it is important to get a sense of what your body's limits are. Getting a physical isn't just important for purposes of exercising; it's important for your life in general.

Perhaps you have high blood pressure or a previously undiagnosed heart condition. It is paramount to know this before you begin vigorous exercise.

While you might think it would be demoralizing to know your limits before beginning a program, just imagine how much worse it could be to suffer a major setback from diving in headfirst when your body just isn't ready.

## **Avoid Doing “Too Much, Too Soon”:**

We all have limits. There is a limit to the amount of weight you can lift, the speed at which you can run, and the energy you can exert without having your system shut down on you.

If you are new to fat loss and exuberant over the possibilities for success, you may launch into exercising without paying heed to your body's limitations.

If you can't squat 200kgs, don't try it just to try it. If you've reached the limit of how much you can bench press, don't start increasing the load until your body can handle it.

You will improve over time, but forcing the issue and trying to do more than you can handle very well could result in injury. Adaptation and improvement should occur gradually.

While you may have a great lifting program, you will not be able to follow it if you injure your shoulder or lower back.

## **Stay Hydrated:**

Water really is quite a magical thing. When it comes to fat loss and exercise, water can play a huge role in determining your success.

While many of the reasons for that are for diet purposes, it is also important for injury prevention.

The fact of the matter is that when you are dehydrated, it affects your physical performance, breathing, heart rate, and blood pressure. In fact, there is a risk of fainting, passing out, or even worse.

Throughout the day, and especially before exercising, be sure to drink enough water.

### **Warm Up:**

A proper warm up can go a long way to preparing your body for the exercise you are about to do. Here are 8 general warm-up basics:

1. Soft-tissue work
2. Corrective static stretching (specific to the individual and/or the activity)
3. Dynamic mobility drills
4. Muscle activation drills
5. Balance and coordination drills
6. Practice exercises
7. New exercises
8. Activity specific drills

~Note: Aspyre Fitness members get Personal Training every month, that would be a great time to discover the right corrective stretching routine and re/pre-hab exercises for you.~

### **Rest and Recovery:**

It is very, very possible to train too much or too hard, and for too long. You cannot ignore when your exercise program calls for a certain amount of rest time between sets or exercises.

It is also imperative that you take days off. You should not be training all out, every day, 7 days a week. Not only will you probably get burned out and bored, but you significantly raise the likelihood of injuring yourself.

### **Dress Appropriately:**

If you were going to run a marathon or sprint against Usain Bolt, you wouldn't wear flip flops, would you?

You are going to work hard in the gym to meet your goals, so you should never show up without being prepared and committed to working out. This means wearing comfortable clothes and supportive shoes.

## **Eating Advice: Consistency is King**

Becoming a healthy eater is no small task. In the end, what is more important than having a slavish devotion to a particular diet regimen is consistent effort to eat well every day. Here are some tips to stay consistent and become a health eater:

### 1. Make one healthy change per week

- Lifelong health is a marathon, not a sprint. You don't have to overhaul your entire life overnight, but it is wise to take steps every week to get better. Every week you should make at least one healthy change to your eating habits.

### 2. Shopping

- Make sure you make a list of foods you want to eat, and stick to it when you go grocery shopping. You will be less likely to eat unhealthy foods if they aren't in your kitchen. One way to ensure that is to simply not buy them.

### 3. Planning/Cooking

- At the beginning of every week, you should plan out your meals. This way, you will know what to buy at the grocery store and be less tempted to slip into bad habits. It is much easier to skip out on fast food if you know what's on the menu on any given day. I recommend writing down these meals and keeping it somewhere you can see every day (such as on the fridge).

### 4. Water, Water Everywhere

- Make sure you have plenty of water. Do you take long car trips? Try bringing a water bottle along for the ride to stay hydrated. You should drink water consistently throughout the day. Perhaps the healthiest tip I can offer would be to try substituting water anytime you have a craving for a soft drink.

### 5. Write It Down

- Keeping a food log will keep you on track and accountable. Without one, it is easy to forget about the deviations from healthy eating you make each day. If you keep a written

record of what you eat, you can more accurately assess your habits and come up with ways to eat better.

## **Sleep: The Final Frontier**

Everyone has to sleep. We sleep so that our body can rest, recover, and repair itself. While we sleep, our brains consolidate memories, allowing us to gradually retain information and perform familiar physical tasks. Sleep also rests and repairs our muscles.

Research has consistently shown that while sleeping, growth hormone production increases. If you get an adequate amount of sleep, your body will take advantage of all the training you have been doing. Miss sleep, and you will also lose out on this great benefit.

Sleep plays such a pivotal role in repairing and building muscles that some trainers have said that the body doesn't get better in the gym, it gets better in bed.

Overall, several studies performed on athletes show that sleep both helps people maintain a healthy weight and even perform better at physical tasks.

Now that you know the powerful influence sleep has on hormones, metabolism, and making the body leaner and more muscular, I recommend you try getting **7-9 hours of sleep every night**.

## **Hold Yourself Accountable with: A Weekly Review**

At the end of every week, you should designate a small amount of time to review your progress. This could be as little as a half an hour or as long as an hour.

However long it is, this weekly review will provide you with invaluable insight into your patterns of behaviour and give you an opportunity to shore up any "weaknesses."

Now, if you've taken anything away from reading this entire guide, you should know how important it is to write. So far I have told you to write down your goals, write down your actions steps, write down your workouts, and keep a food log.

Rest assured, with a steady weekly review, all this writing will not be in vain.

During your review, you must look over everything you have written. Did you work out at the designated times? Did you achieve all of your daily/weekly goals? Have you been eating healthy?

It's easy to overlook your missteps if you have no set time and place where you actually review what you have done over the course of a given week.

A weekly review holds you accountable to yourself. However, do not interpret a failure to reach goals or complete action steps as the end of the world. It is not!

In fact, understanding that you will make mistakes and then identifying those mistakes is the only way to become consistent.

As a result, a thoughtful weekly review process will help you improve your life beyond all measure!



We hope that you have found this book useful. Please remember that the Aspyre Fitness team are here to help you reach your goals, so if we can help in any way just ask us.

Best regards in Fitness

Jamie and YOUR Aspyre Fitness Team