



David Fairlamb

THE FIT FACTOR

Don't miss David's tips every Saturday in your Journal

OUR mental strength has been challenged as much as our physical one over the past two years.

Covid has taken us all out of our comfort zones and through times that we never thought we would have to endure.

Many of you will now realise that the mental and physical side go hand in hand in our general health and wellbeing.

It is more important than ever to take time to consistently look after yourself, with exercise and mental toughness playing a crucial role in our bodies' everyday health.

Making the correct choices is one thing, but sticking to them and being disciplined is another.

Those who have set some new sensible goals for 2022, here are a few of my tips to help you hold on to your focus and positivity:

■ Be mindful as to why you have set the goals and bounce off any outside influences that may directly interfere with that. There is always a way – find it and keep repeating.

■ Consistently tell yourself to keep strong and be proud of what you are doing, everyone has good and bad days. It's how you deal with the bad times that makes you stronger.

■ This is a positive choice you are making – see it as that – not as a threat or a negative. Aim to live in the present not the past.

■ Monitor how you are progressing every week, this will keep you on track and strong. If it is a long-term project, try breaking it down into smaller timescales.

■ Some people can feel negative at certain times of the day, this is the time to change your associations. In other words, do something different at that time, eg go for a walk, read or watch something funny on TV. Changing your routine works and will help redirect your thoughts.

■ Where possible, surround yourself with positive people, this will always give you a mental boost and refocus your outlook.

■ Have a film or TV programme on hand that inspires you, this

will help reignite your motivation.

■ Channel your energy and focus on personal milestones. These are the ones that will really make a difference in your life and keep you driving forward.

■ If you face a setback, use it to your advantage and work even harder, with more grit and determination. Think of it as a challenge that you will take pride in overcoming.

■ Think strong inside and out. With all that is happening in the world, be pleased with any progress you can make.

Of course there are days when your targets will seem easy, it's the days when things get tough that your real character and mental toughness comes into play.

Try to find your own way of pushing through these times, anyone can give in, that's easy – there is no better feeling than staying strong and achieving exactly what you set out to do.

Whatever you do or say, make everything as positive as you can throughout 2022.



> Breaking down your goal into smaller timescales will make it more achievable and help develop your mental toughness