

The Story of My Health and Fitness Journey



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“The old that is strong does not wither.” J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring*.

President Rekas Sloan asked me to write about my health and fitness regimen and explain why I do what I do to maintain a strong body, good health and proper nutrition, which are all essential ingredients in overall fitness.

Let me give you some background. I am 62 years old and I have been a lawyer for almost 36 years. I've always been a litigator, trying cases and arguing appeals. It's stressful work, requiring focus, willpower and often long hours. That effort eventually takes a toll, not only on the mind, but also on the body.

In 2011, I went for my annual physical (which I had skipped for a couple of years, because I was too busy). I learned that my weight had increased substantially and my blood pressure and cholesterol numbers weren't great either. My doctor recommended that I lose some weight and start a moderate exercise program. If not, he cautioned that things could get worse and I could be at risk for serious health problems. Of course, he also reminded me that I was getting older, a fact the mirror reminded me of every morning.

I had not exercised – at least deliberately – in years. My son, Michael, who is 30 years younger than I am, had just completed P90X® – a 90-day at-home extreme fitness program. Michael looked fantastic; and he was in tremendous physical condition. But he was 26 at the time and I was 56. I asked Michael if he thought I could complete the P90X® program, as he had done. Now, my son loves and supports me and he wanted to be as encouraging as possible, but he also wanted to be realistic and cautioned: “I guess you could give it a try, Dad. But, please take it easy. It's a really tough program. Physically demanding.” I could hear more than a hint of doubt in his voice; and that doubt served as much greater motivation for me than anything the doctor could have said. And so, on March 20, 2011, I began P90X®. For the next 90 days I dedicated myself to the pull-ups, push-ups, plyometrics, weight training, martial arts, yoga and core workouts that comprise the P90X® program. Little by little, day by day, week by week, I felt better and stronger. I also followed the P90X® nutrition plan and started eating smaller, healthier meals five times a day to keep my metabolism constantly fired up.

After about a month, others started to notice changes; and their compliments served as further motivation to continue to improve and work even harder. When I finished the program in late June 2011, I looked and felt like a different person. I was strong and fit, healthy and physically confident – and 38 pounds lighter!

What did I do next? I decided to keep going. I completed other at-home fitness programs to further improve my strength, cardiovascular health, flexibility and mobility and also focused on martial arts training, specifically, Krav Maga and Muay Thai. I have completed dozens of these programs, and I consider each new one to be a fresh challenge. Each morning I work out at home, or do so on the road when I travel. Initially, I used DVDs, but now the workouts are streamed live, so I can do any workout at any time, anywhere. I have no plans to stop. I want to stay strong because, despite the aging process (which unfortunately I can't stop), I do not plan to wither.