



Lesson 9: Tips for Success

Hi, everyone. Welcome to day nine of our fasting master class. In today's lesson I'm going to share my top tips for fasting success. Now, this might seem like kind of an oddball place for this lesson to come up, but so many of you are looking to extend those 16 and 18 hour fast and do some 24s or 42s and many of you who've been doing the 24s, are trying to flex your fast day muscle and do some of the longer intermittent and fast. So, I think that this is a good spot to start talking about tips for continued success, before we dive into some more niche-y topics like extended fasting. Now, I'm so grateful to hear how appreciative you guys were of lesson seven, when you really took home the message of consistency, so my top tip for success is that you've got to show up for your fast at least three times a week.

And this is just absolutely critical to think of your fasting as a therapeutic treatment that you're doing, fasting is completely different than any other diet you've done before, every other diet is just the same approach calorie restriction just packaged in different ways with different labels, different names, but fasting is a whole different ball game. And unlike calorie restriction diets, fasting has so many therapeutic benefits beyond our waistline, true deep health benefits and the real reason behind why we are trying to lose weight in the first place in so many cases. So, I really loved all of the feedback from lesson seven and I just want to remind everyone that it is consistently showing up for your fast that makes a difference. Now, and many of you did like the example of the twins but let's think about it from another perspective, imagine you only go to the gym for a few weeks here and there throughout the year.

You go a few times in the spring, you go a few times in the fall, you miss the summer because of summer vacation, you miss the December time because of the holidays, do you really think that that inconsistency at the gym is going to lead you to being stronger at the end of the year? Probably not. It's really important to make sure that you're showing up for your training sessions at least three to four times a week, if you want to make any progress. Now, you can't do that all of the time but you can certainly try to do at 80% of the time, back when I lived in Toronto and I went to join a gym. The owner said to me, "Unless you're going to make the commitment to come three to four times a week 80% of the time, don't bother because you're not going to be a successful client, gaining muscle and conditioning your body that takes consistent effort.

And I'd rather turn away your business than have you waste money." And it's really the same approach with fasting, it's absolutely the same thing but 80% of the year you do need to show up for your fast. And there's going to be 20% of the year where it's a holiday time or is a vacation period or life, it throws you a big curve ball and you're really trying to navigate all this habit change that comes along with fasting and changing your food. Now, just remember if there's ever failure, it's always a lesson and there is this period of time where we have to unfortunately learn lessons throughout our journey. My whole experience has been in 10 year work in progress with food, and I would say I didn't have that many issues around food, I just knew what I liked and I didn't have a whole lot of variety in my diet.

And it's taken me 10 years sort out some connections I've had with certain food types, so hang in there show yourself some grace it's so important. Now, this free fast you do a week they don't have to always be the same amount of fasting, think back to those gym training sessions some weeks your body's tired and fatigue maybe after travel, maybe after having a cold or a poor period of sleep it happens. But you know that you can't do your full weight training session for example during those times, but it's still good to show up at the gym stretch getting some movement, work on some mobility work, you know that that is going to help you stay conditioned, so when you do have better weeks after more sleep and less stress and less travel, that your training sessions where you'll be able to really optimize getting some good weightlifting and really increase your muscle mass.

Now, we have the exact same thing happened to us when we're fasting, but we beat ourselves up about it left right and center we don't show ourselves any grace, certainly not that grace that we show ourselves at the gym, when it's just better to show up than to not show up at all. It's the same thing with fasting, just because your mind has one plan your body might not always be able to execute it, so it was better just to show up for your fasting and do what you can that day but still show up three times a week to keep your body conditioned.

So, if you're someone who's doing 3\24 hour... 3\42 hour fasts a week or 2\48 hour fasts a week on a consistent basis. Some weeks you're going to have to do 3\24s and some weeks would be a huge success if you just get in 3/16s, cause life happens show yourself some grace and just be happy that you're showing up for your fast you're conditioning your fasting muscle and when things settle down, you'll be able to jump back in and do those longer fasts that you want to do to reach your health goals.

So, don't let your fasting muscle atrophy everyone, stay consistent and keep showing up for your fasting days even if it does mean less fasting it's not a failure, it's a huge step keeping your fasting muscle condition in order to move in the right direction. Now, my second biggest tip is around mindful eating. You need to be present when you are eating, we talk a lot about

consistency and fasting and showing up for your fasting days, we also need to show up for eating days and be present.

Now, there's two different ways that you can eat. You can be fully present where you're paying attention to the food that you're eating, you're paying attention to the tastes and the textures and the smells and the combinations of the food that you're eating together all of the different sensations, and you're just really enjoying your meal. What happens when you do that? Will you activate your parasympathetic nervous system? And this is a nervous system that promotes relaxation, rest, and digestion. It's exactly what we want to have happening when we eat, reduces symptoms of IBS and it increases your ability to reach satiation much faster when we're fully present and being mindful and just engaging with our foods. Now, what happens when you don't do that? What happens when you're trying to eat while you're multitasking and whether it's doing things around the home, whether it's watching the news or reading the news or flipping through social media or watching that YouTube video about how to knit. Going into the winter months your mind is focused elsewhere.

Even if it is on something pleasurable, your mind is focused elsewhere while you're trying to eat and this has an opposite effect on our bodies. Instead of engaging our rest and digest nervous system we engage our flight or fight nervous system, our sympathetic nervous system and our bodies think that we are under threat. We experience increased appetite, reduced ability to reach satiation and we take away energy from our digestion leaving us vulnerable to experiencing symptoms of IBS. So, even though you might think looking at that Instagram account full of kittens, or checking up with your favorite Facebook group and learning or watching a video or reading the daily news, that's where our focus is and at any time where our focus is regardless if it's on something happy or sad or stressful. It's always going to engage our sympathetic nervous system if we're trying to eat at the same time, our mind is focused elsewhere. So, slow down while you're eating, it makes a huge difference.

Now, this is tough to do especially in today's day and age. We are so stimulated, right now as I record this video I'm literally looking at five screens on my desk, in various forms from tablets and phones that we're testing apps on to multiple monitors and cameras. We're constantly being stimulated by technology and there's a lot going in the world, and there's just an infinite number of ways to connect with people these days. So, it's weird to sit down and just try to think, "Oh, what did that piece of steak taste like?" "Could that piece of broccoli actually taste like that?" Can you remember from when you just ate a few moments ago? Probably not. So, things that we like to encourage people to do one really quick way to start engaging with your food, is actually trying to start to count the number of chews that you have of each bite. Now, the gold standard is about 18 chews per bite of food, but I think even if we can get half of that in 9 or 10 chews per bite a food, we're making strong efforts towards slowing down and enjoy our food.

It's kind of similar to meditation where you do that body scan, and doing a body scan as a sort of a great way to help pry me to be able to do more advanced meditations. Well, being present and counting your chews helps you become a little bit more in tune with your eating, and helps you develop some better habits around mindful eating practices. So, I really encourage you to stop with the distractions, sit there and enjoy your food. All right, and my last tip is really about fasting mindset, we've touched base on this a bit in previous videos and lessons but it's so important to make sure that you don't have any negative mindsets around fasting and eating in order to build a healthy relationship with both.

So, when you're fasting it's so important to not think about fasting using that word 'fasting' because what do we associate with fasting? We associate deprivation with fasting. And then we feel like we've entered... We've finished the state of deprivation and we're allowed to eat, then we start to tie reward to the terminology around eating, so if we think of fasting as deprivation and then we go into eating as rewarding, we tend to get stuck in this really negative cycle. Now, it's tough to do because when you first start fasting, you're literally thinking about fasting but over time you'll stop thinking about fasting so much as your fasting muscle starts to grow, and this will become easier. But as you're going through your fasting journey try to be mindful of this concept, and instead of calling your fasting days, 'fasting days' and eating days 'eating days' our community mentor Mark Tom has come up with a new strategy.

His fasting days are healing days and his eating days are rebuilding days. And this simple change in semantics really has a huge powerful impact on your mindset. So, one day Mark decided in the community forum that, "Nope, I'm not using those words anymore because I'm stuck in this terrible cycle." But these words inspire me, they make me feel really positive about both my fasting and my approach to eating. And this just took off as a wildfire and then we incorporated it in some of our group fasting challenges, and now as you go through the community fast... The community forum, you'll hear people say, "Hey, I'm having a healing day." Or "Hey, it's my rebuilding day." And you'll know what they're referring to. So, what does healing bring to your mind when you think of healing?

Well, I know from talking to Mark and our other members that healing to them means seeing their insulin levels go down. Enabling their body to become more insulin sensitive, causing them to lose body fat and see a reduction in their blood sugar levels. That was a pretty cool thing cause they all lead to medication reduction and they all lead to risk of developing different diseases being significantly reduced, how cool is that? And then the deeper health benefits that come along through fasting like Autophagy, which means cellular recycling where old and damaged cells are broken down and repaired and placed with healthier replacements or versions of those cells, how cool is that? The anti-aging and the disease fighting is some pretty good stuff. And then to think of rebuilding as you enter the eating phase, well you just have cleaned your system and now you're rebuilding you're planting all of the fresh nutrients that you need to grow into a healthy body.

And I think that that is such a cool strategy for having positive associations, and I think the more positive associations you can have the better. Now, for many people there are some negative associations that you're going to experience, take hunger for example, hunger pains can be uncomfortable and we've only really known to associate them with also deprivation. Now, when I was fasting I started to think of hunger pains as a sign that I'm going to start burning body fat soon because it is, and I developed a positive association with experiencing hunger pains. So, a few weeks after I really tried to change and shift my mindset and say, "No, this isn't a bad thing, this is actually a good thing." And I have plenty of body fat to fuel off of, in my thighs and my hips and my biceps and my triceps, I have body fat a fuel off of and that's going to shrink away.

And that is going to reduce my risk of Cardiovascular disease, other types of metabolic syndrome issues that's pretty cool. So, I look forward to experiencing hunger pains in the future. So, suggestion is to actually sit down and write down these perhaps negative feelings or uncomfortable feelings, and see if you can match any positive associations with them. I encourage you to reach out in the community forum and write down what you're struggling with, and see what your fellow community mentors and community members say and what insights they can share with you, to help you turn some of the things that appear to be downers about fasting into things that are really positive about it. And once you really can adjust these mindset issues, they'll be on the road for complete success. So, we want to focus on consistency, mindful eating and we really want to work on our mindset as we continue our fasting journey.