

# *Fit For Life: The Myth of Perfect Conditions*

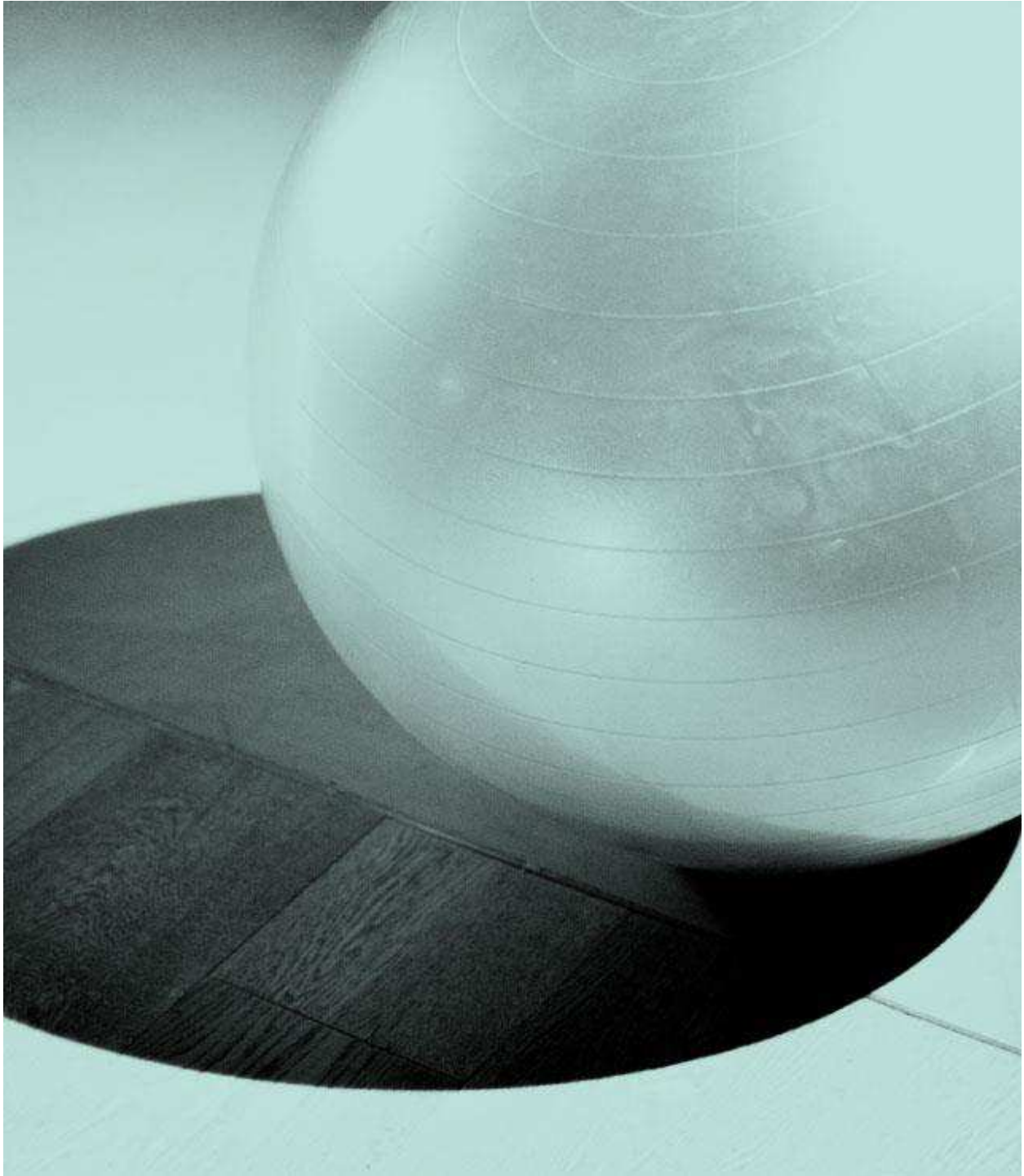


Call it 'The Goldilocks Syndrome' – "it's too hot, it's too cold" – but when it comes to making space for fitness in our lives, it is all too easy to make excuses. Lane Crawford speaks to the most informed fitness and health experts across the globe from Hong Kong to London on the ways in which we can actually get up and get moving.

Starting anything new is always a challenge. "It's really hard in the beginning because you aren't that good at it – yet. So the effort required is intense," says Nealy Fischer, founder of Hong Kong-based health and wellness organisation, Mayya Movement. Adding to that, "most of us don't want to work that hard," she continues. "Excuses usually relate to limited resources from limited time and money to limited ability. But most excuses stem from one root: limited desire."

*"You must become comfortable with being uncomfortable. Stop making excuses and start awakening desire and your world can change in an instant."*

*– Nealy Fischer*



In Hong Kong where people have turned being busy into a competitive sport, time is indeed precious. For Fischer, the first (and hardest) step to a successful fitness

journey is to decide that you really want to get fit. “Even once you have made this commitment, the stresses of Hong Kong living pose a unique struggle for many of us. Work, kids, social commitments and travel all consume our energy; thus the challenge of taking care of ourselves is a constant battle,” she says.

As a mother of four young children, Fischer has learnt that the power of ‘no’ can take one far: “Saying ‘no’ to certain things allows you to say ‘yes’ to others. I suggest taking a close look at your week to see which meetings, plans or commitments you can take out of your schedule to fit an hour’s chance to sweat every day. Everyone can find one hour in an entire day!”

With his holistic approaches to fitness and wellbeing, A-list personal trainer James Duigan proudly includes Rosie Huntington-Whiteley, and Lara Stone on his list of clients. Founder of London’s premier gym and fitness brand Bodyism, he has built his reputation on one very simple philosophy: to be generous to yourself in every aspect of your life.

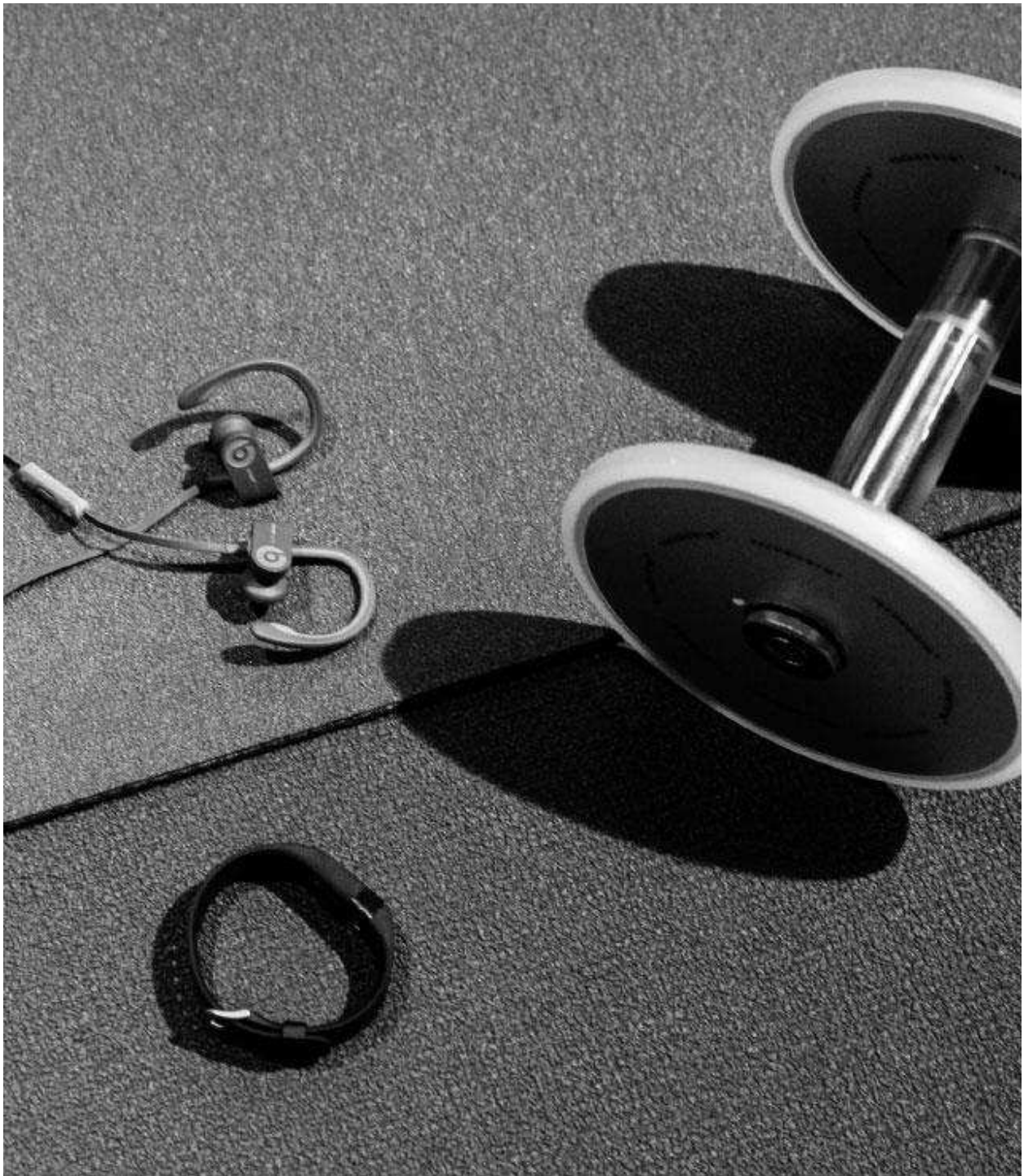
“People forget to be kind to themselves!” he says. “We live in a world of ever growing body image pressures, sometimes promoting unrealistic body ideals. It may sound simple, but keeping oneself motivated is about positivity and accepting of your body.”

In recent years the modern concept of ‘wellness’ has emerged and gone viral with social media, and Duigan expresses concern at the lack of accountability in this new ‘Wild West’. “While I love the fact that health has never been more talked about, I worry a great deal about all the misinformation and insanity out there,” he says. “There are some amazing bloggers, but there are also way too many others handing out damaging advice with no consequences. My advice is just don’t go there.”

*“We all just need to take a minute to breathe, reflect and think about what we are putting into our bodies instead of being concerned with how far away bikini season is, or how*

*many calories are in a banana. Learning to accept and love yourself is the key to respecting your body and living a healthy, happy life."*

*– James Duigan*



Duigan' s top tip for staying motivated? "Have clear and realistic goals in your mind. Being able to set goals and achieve them is one of the best feelings in the world in any aspect of your life," he says. "Try not to set unrealistic goals with tight deadlines; this will just lead to stress and worry and will essentially put you off doing exercise full stop."

The reality is that there will never be perfect conditions; you will never be less busy, you will never be less tired and you will never improve your fitness levels unless you actually start. Set yourself up with goals, be realistic and do it for the right reasons, and each day becomes the start for new possibility.

## **James Duigan' s Top Five Tips for Fitness Beginners**

1. It' s so important to move your body every single day because your body loves to move! You don' t need to slave away in the gym for hours to achieve great results – it' s perfectly acceptable to just go for a walk.
2. It can be difficult when leading a busy lifestyle to make the time, but you should make the time for you. This doesn' t mean waking up in the early hours to go running. It' s about taking time out of hectic week when you can to take care of your body and to move it as it is intended to.
3. Be wary of people trying to sell you faddy diet products of 'bikini body' guides to get you 'ripped' or promising rapid weight loss. This is only going to disappoint and give you short-term effects, if any.
4. Don' t put yourself through unnecessary stress. Don' t get caught up in a 'regime' or a 'programme' . Sometimes we set ourselves up to fail by saying "I have to work out XX amount of times a week." If you don' t feel like going to the gym, go for a walk or do some yoga instead.
5. For complete beginners, try a variety of exercises – at home, at the gym or in the outdoors – and see what suits you best and what you enjoy the most.



