

Forum:[Hack Forums](#)

Thread: [Getting in good shape is a lot like compound interest](#)

TR Pianoo - May 26, 2020, 2:31 pm

Excruciatingly slow at the beginning, then extremely easy later on.

I'm sure this has been said before a million times in some form or another, but with the lockdown and a lot of people stuck inside, I'm sure physical health and well-being is a challenge for many people. When you start working out again, or maybe if you've never done it before but you've decided that enough is enough and you want to get in shape, you're going to face a wall that everyone experiences.

At the beginning, especially if you're very out of shape, it's going to feel insurmountable, and every exercise you do will feel completely futile. Maybe you can only do a single pushup, maybe not even that. Maybe you can't even look at a set of stairs or a treadmill without breaking into a sweat and nearly passing out.

This is the early stage of "compound interest", which in finance is the exponential growth of an investment. Imagine putting a single penny in an investment and having it double every so often. For the first little while, your wealth will grow by a negligible rate. Only 1 cent to 2 cents the first time, then 4 cents, then 8, etc. It seems like a complete waste of time. But, starting with only one penny, and doubling the amount every time, you would have over 1 million dollars after only 27 cycles. For reference, at half that, 13 cycles, you'd only have 81 dollars.

This isn't a post about finance so that was just an example of exponential growth/compound interest to make my point, but, this is more or less how it feels when you're getting in shape as well. Those early stages are going to feel grueling and utterly pointless in every measurable way. But, if you dig deep and stick with it, you'll notice a change. You'll slowly but surely start losing some weight, and gaining some strength and coordination. You'll find it easier to do the workouts, your body is learning better and more efficient ways to perform the movements. Your mental health is improving, making it easier to stay focused and goal oriented. Your sleep is getting better, and you've likely started eating healthier to complement your goal of getting in shape.

All of a sudden, you'll wake up one day and feel significantly better, and maintaining your newfound level of fitness will be MUCH easier than it ever was to get there in the first place, especially compared to those beginning days. As your body and mind get in better shape, they develop new skills and tools that make it easier to keep going, just like how compound interest starts making a ton of money once it's had a chance to build up.

So really the point of this post is just to say that the real challenge of getting in shape is overcoming that initial feeling of hopeless, and having faith that one pushup will turn into two, then that will turn into four, and so on and so forth until one day you're doing 50 or more, maybe even 100 or more. You just have to believe in your end goals and stick with it no matter how shitty it feels or how pointless it seems. Good luck.

Goods - May 26, 2020, 8:46 pm

Thats actually a super valid way of putting weight loss. Good point.

Soulmate~?? - May 26, 2020, 8:56 pm

A lot of things in life are that way, especially when you're learning something new. One day you wake up with a lightbulb and think about how at some point you never would have imagined being able to know so much.

Also, to continue with your example, there's also declines and plateaus. Some days you just won't feel good or will feel burnt out and won't be able to work out as much as you wanted to or at all so the next best thing you can do is give it your all the next day or invest your time in something else productive. And of course, everyone hits a plateau so once you do you have to try to take on another challenge. Another way of looking at a plateau is like a habit though. For example if you can do 100 pushups every day but for months that's what you've been stuck on then it's better to consider it a part of your routine now and move on to other things to build on top of it. I guess that would be the equivalent to selling your investment

It's funny you use that example because at the start of the year I started doing 50 pushups a day which felt impossible, then after a few months I could easily do 100. A while after that I got to 200 and now as of a couple months ago I've been doing 300 a day but it's hard to do anything more because there's only so much time in the day and it's best to wait a few hours after eating a full meal to do any. Plus I don't wanna just be doing pushups all day so I added squats, running, and situps

gianni12 - May 27, 2020, 6:33 am

Yeah it kind of is a compound interest. At the end of the day it's more like a marathon instead of a sprint. If you're fat you ain't getting fit immediately. But in some time you'll see some results and it'll get better and better.

TSLAstock3000USDez - June 20, 2020, 9:43 am

yeah youre right, that exactly it man

mindshift5 - October 3, 2020, 3:47 am

This makes a lot of sense

The analogy was really on point

I think we've got ourselves a sage here

Starks - October 4, 2020, 7:23 am

Wow! That's so inspiring, especially for some of us struggling to stay fit. I'll now stay in there to enjoy the benefits of exponential growth.

Bob the Builder - October 8, 2020, 6:58 pm

Walk, Walk, and Walk Some More, it's a really easy way to weight loss. With regular exercise and a consistent diet, you can maintain your results.