

# FATHERHOOD & FITNESS

## TIME CRUNCHED

By Dale Barr

4 a.m. Wednesday morning. The alarm goes off. My first client is at 5 a.m., and I'll be training clients straight through until 11:30 a.m. Then it's home to relieve the nanny at 12:30 p.m., and I'll spend the rest of the day with my two boys, both of whom are under age two. If I'm going to get my own workout in it has to happen in that 11:30–12:30 window.

On this day, however, like many of us with kids, I'm pulled off my schedule to take one of our boys to the pediatrician. Everything gets bumped back an hour or two or skipped altogether, including naptime for the boys, household chores, and, of course, a workout. Sick kid aside, it is disappointing to miss a workout. I look forward to my one hour of gym time to destress and have some alone time. However, I've learned not to dwell on one missed day or let it snowball. I look at it as only one day.

My next day's schedule is different but no less hectic. I have our nanny come an hour early on Tuesdays and Thursdays so I can be sure to get a workout in before my afternoon clients start. I've built this in as part of my day so when things like the last minute pediatrician visit pop up I should still get in two to three workouts every week.

As you can see from my daily itinerary, workouts need to be scheduled. One of the most common reasons I hear from people as to why they can't or don't exercise is "I don't have the time." I'm here to tell you, *yes, yes you do*. I know firsthand that it's not easy to find time for "personal" things. The answer? Make an appointment for your workout. If you just roll through your day and hope to get a workout in when time allows then it's not going to happen very often.

As a father who also runs a personal training business, I have to schedule most everything. Spending time with my boys every day is extremely important to me, so I have structured my personal training business, even if it means declining new business, so that I can be present in my children's lives. I've been fortunate to see first steps, hear first words, and be at the park to watch my son climb a ladder by himself. I'm a better parent and better role model if I'm at my best.

In juggling parenting, marriage, my business, and my own workouts, I get the thought process of "I don't have time." When I hear someone say that it makes me think that person doesn't value himself or herself. As parents we give and give and give. It's easy to forget and not care for ourselves. Don't allow that to happen.

Let's talk about some ideas to counter the time crunch and get you back on the road to better health:

**Start early.** What time does your day start? Can you get into a gym or workout at home early? This is the best bet. Get your exercise in before your "day" happens. If your workout is going to happen at the end of your day, after work, after kids sports/activities, life inevitably happens and you will put it off. If you need to be in the shower by 7 a.m., get up an hour earlier and get 30–60 minutes in before anything has the chance to derail you.

**Join a gym near your home or work.** Convenience here is the key. You are not likely to drive out of your way on a consistent basis to workout with all of life's other commitments pulling at you.

**Incorporate your workouts into other activities.** If you have young kids, get a good stroller and take walks daily. Pushing our stroller with both boys can be a great workout especially now that they collectively weigh over 50 lbs! Our playground is a little over a mile away, so walking there and back is a great way to spend time together and get some exercise in too.

**Buy workout equipment for your home.** For those times when getting to a gym isn't going to happen have at hand free weights, dumbbells or barbells, kettlebells, a jump rope, bands, or a TRX in-home system. All of these allow for multiple exercises that challenge and change you and can fit in a small corner in the basement or garage.

**Hire a trainer.** While I might be a little biased on this one, you do need someone to keep you accountable. You are far less likely to miss a session if there is a financial commitment and you know someone else is expecting you. If you miss, you'll get calls, texts, or emails asking you where you are and what's going on. A good trainer will also make sure you're getting the most out of the time you do invest and keep you on track toward any specific goals you want to attain.

Remember getting some exercise in is almost always better than nothing. You don't have to have 60–90 minutes every time you go to the gym. Only have 30 minutes, great, a lot can be done in that time and you'll feel better physically and mentally after a workout versus chalking up another missed day. 16

Dale Barr, owner of d3 Fitness in Annapolis, is a Certified Personal Trainer through the American Council on Exercise (ACE), as well as a Certified Venice Nutrition Coach and CrossFit Level I and CrossFit Endurance Coach. For more information, visit [d3fitness.com](http://d3fitness.com).



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