

Where Mind
Meets Matter

THE FIT AWAKENING



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Genesis Fitness

7 LIFE HACKS IN 14 DAYS
HABIT TRACKER

Daily Plan

6:00 - Morning Meditation

6:30 - Nature Walk

6:00-22:00 - Deep Breathing

19:00 - Begin Fast

20:00 - Reduce Blue Light

21:00 - Meal Prep

22:00 - Bedtime

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7 Life Hacks In 14 Days

The Fit Awakening

What to Expect from This Programme

Lowered Stress
Better Quality Sleep
Increased Productivity
Mood Enhancement
Hunger Tolerance
Energy Boost for Training

The Habit Map

6AM – Meditate for 10 Minutes
6:30AM – Walk In Nature for 10–20 Minutes
6AM – 10PM – Regular Breathing Cycles of 4/7/8
7PM – Begin Fast
8PM – Reducing Blue Lights
9PM – Meal Prep
10PM – Bedtime

Times are merely suggested and the plan can be changed to different hours, as long as each habit's requirements are met.

Habit Tracker Guide

This interactive sheet will be your best friend over the programme, as you tick off successful days of each habit. To use the link provided, go to 'File' and click 'Make Copy'. Now it will be fully editable.

If the bars are getting close to 80%, you're ahead of the pace. Another option would be simply to print off the sheet on Page 2, stick it on your fridge, and cross them in with a marker. Whichever you prefer.

Where Mind Meets Matter

There's a crossroads lurking at the opening scramble of the fitness trail. A chance to go the easy route, or accept the challenge. You can enter the fray with frenzy, jumping into the highlight-reel sweat-drenched workouts, saddled with whichever diet takes you the closest to starvation.

And that's the easy choice. Despite what you might feel after somehow making your way to the end of another crippling workout, it really is. Throwing more abuse at the body is a simpler option than making real spanning changes to the lifestyle that's propping it up. Most of the time, the former route winds back and drops you behind the starting blocks.

There are success stories, but they tend to get dominated by the numbers of faltering trails left in their wake. Simply put, it's a high stakes affair. It doesn't need to be.

It's a critical starting step to be mindful about the state of the body before the assault begins. If you're approaching training with an impressive backlog of bad nutrition and unhealthy habits, then the system is already buckling under duress. Add in the usual fun fare of HIIT circuits, a huge caloric deficit, and you're tempting the body to resist change with every step. It may work for a while, but you're venturing forward with the brakes jammed on. The rebound is merely a question of when.

You'll be running off motivation, and that's a finite material. Willpower ebbs and flows. We all encounter dips in the mindset game at some point, especially if it's being continuously sapped by a schedule that's set up to overload. When the well inevitably comes up dry, dragging yourself into the gym will feel impossible.

This isn't helped by the fitness industry offering up countless flashy methods fresh off the conveyor belt, for amping up intensity to force the weight scale into movement. It seems logical to assume that more sweat means better. Except the level of effort you put in the gym is dependant on your ability to recharge and recover. That's going to plummet when using the flashy strategies. Dragging your performance and willpower with it.

If you're looking to see any appreciable change in your body through training, then that's going to require consistent intensity in the gym over at least two months. You have to be able to look into the distance and judge whether your body will be able to carry you that far.

A successful programme needs to begin with a moment for introspection. Listen to the body. Are you having to constantly wade through bouts of brain fog, digestive distress, lethargy, or hunger? If the body isn't quite clicking as a machine that's built for action and well-being, then there's something that needs fixing.

Adding training and a caloric deficit can just compound the issues under the surface. The focus needs to be diverted towards the other 23 hours left in the day once you've dealt with whatever calamity you've conjured up in the gym.

And this is where we bring in the machinations of the parasympathetic nervous system, which acts to balance out the actions of the fight-or-flight response triggered by physical or mental stress. Such as combining 20 reps of kettlebell swings with interval sprints. Bumping into an ex by the groceries. Or stubbing your toes on a busy sidewalk and feeling the rising wave of shame as you hope it goes unnoticed.

These events will be strewn across your day. Lying in wait at every turn, and there's only so much you can do to avoid them. If you choose to never leave the house, there'll just be another heart rate spike as you refresh your emails. The stressors may differ in the threat they pose to your life, but they will all work across one mechanism.

Cortisol pours across body and you prepare for battle. You're ready to start swinging at whatever hurt you. Except it's often an inanimate object you're dealing with. And if that's not the case, you probably don't want to deal with prison and all the paperwork that comes with it.

It's a silly situation all round. Stress is an ancient reflex designed to help you somehow survive in these predicaments. Most of us have evolved beyond the point of finding danger behind every turn, but that doesn't stop the brain from interpreting most events as a chance for calamity.

In most cases there won't be an axe to grind, or a foe to face. So the cortisol continues to linger in the bloodstream, with no means of release. Training helps, but if you're sensitive to stress, it's not going to be nearly enough by itself. Over time it will steadily build up to chronic levels of inflammation that hampers physique change with an armada of unhappy effects.

Sleep can be scuppered in both quantity and quality, the struggle increasing as you go deeper into the week. You wake up tired and that's sinking activity levels. Excess water retention blunts any chance of seeing a drop on the scale. Increased insulin and leptin resistance provide a great chance for a fat rebound. These issues will all feed off each other, forming a cycle that turns into a spiral.

The answer to dealing with this challenge is simple. Make small-scale but productive changes to your regular habits. Excessive stress is often a product of a lifestyle that fails to deal with the day to day stressors. Habit change should be held front and centre of the first few weeks of a fitness campaign. It can be used to focus on improving the parasympathetic response. It will make for faster progress in muscle gain or fat loss, by allowing you to prime the body for better recovery and therefore, superior energy.

That's only concerning the surface. The boosts it lends to mental health make the greatest change of all. Where the mind goes, the body follows. You need your brain on form if you're going to stay consistently at the races over the months it takes to eke out a good transformative programme.

Habits are the regular patterns that are propping up your lifestyle. At the beginning, there will be plenty that will either need to be optimised, or scrapped. Going to sleep at 2AM with crumbs on your chest is a routine that you'd be better off without. The same goes for when you absentmindedly reach for a beer every time the football's on.

Unfortunately this is why it's the hard route. Chances are many of the bad habits have been entrenched in your life for years if not over a matter of decades. The longer you've had them, the harder it will be to let go. Simply taking them out of your day's cycle leaves a vacuum that constantly tries to suck you back in.

Instead of merely sweeping bad habits under the carpet, work through substitutions. Install new habits that can be fitted seamlessly into your routine and keep you in the fitness conscious frame throughout the day.

Not everyone is starting off broken and in need of an overhaul. This doesn't have to be the case for you. There's always the opportunity for fine tuning.

The Programme - 7 Habits In 14 Days for Maximum Impact

This is a key starting point in Genesis Trail, my process for transforming the body into a machine. I've created 7 habits to engage over a 14 day action plan. These habits have been carefully selected for their simplicity and the large-scale effects they have on energy and stress levels. If you can even make do with 2-3 of them, your routine will be far more optimised for any weightlifting programme.

They won't touch on training itself, as the focus here is on upgrading the parasympathetic system. Once that's going up in gears, dialling up the effort in the gym will be a formality. Lifting weights is a lot easier if you're waking up with energy to spare.

Why have I set it for 14 days? It's a period long enough for the brain and body to adapt to a system that might initially feel uncomfortable. And at the same time, it's not such a long trek that you convince yourself at the halfway mark that the finish line is a fantasy.

What happens after 14 days? That's up to you. There's every advantage to keeping them as constant fixture going forward, but take this as a trial period. It will be long enough for the habits to take shape, and for you to feel their effects. From then on, it's your choice on which stay embedded in the daily routine.

HABIT 1

MEDITATION



Morning Meditation for 10 Minutes

Alternative – Take it straight before bedtime

Summary – A moment of quiet to set about your positive intention to the day. Any form of meditation works here, just sit cross-legged or on a chair and let your breaths take focus over the noise in your brain.

How It Helps – Meditation is a proven way to develop the brain both in its physical structure and chemistry, so it would be useful to view it by practical benefits, rather than the spiritual overlay. Your ability to maintain attentiveness will be improved, along with raising productivity by sensitivity to dopamine (reward pathway) and lowering symptoms of anxiety.

It might not be possible to control how the day goes, but you can absolutely control the start. By taking a few moments to settle and be present, you're able to gradually gain mastery over the mind and dim the noise.

Once you've somehow struggled out of bed, try your best to get over to your meditative station without falling to the urge to check the phone first. Part of the reason for meditation is to reverse the short term inclinations built up through social media and other sources of fast browsing.

Social media typically involves rapidly clicking through to new content. With every new slide, dopamine is released, the hormone that acts as the mind's reward pathway. Excessive amounts can desensitise the brain to dopamine and reduce feelings of productivity.

Meditation on the other hand can increase the hormones levels more naturally and resensitise the process.

If you can't sit cross-legged without cramping up, pull a chair over and get started. Set a timer for 10 minutes and let your mind focus on the breaths, which need to be slow and deliberate. Watch the lights dance on the back of your eyelids. Relax the back of the tongue. When the mind inevitably wanders off, acknowledge the new thought rather than avoid it, and then draw back to the breath.

When you finish, don't move straight away. Take a pause to examine how you feel, and take a note before you move on. Your focus should be improved. The heart rate should be slower. It's the ideal state for being productive and thinking creatively and objectively.

A session of meditation can be taken at any point in the day, so play around with it to see where it best suits you. Ten minutes before writing an assignment might well see you finish the project with an hour to spare. It's a potential superpower that's free to learn and use. So approach it with patience and the long game in mind.

HABIT 2

NATURE WALK



Morning Walk for 20 Minutes

Alternative – On your lunch break, or before bedtime. Use a bike if you prefer.

Summary – A stroll outside in nature, where you can catch the morning sun if you're lucky and take a quick break from the hustle and bustle. Try taking a podcast or an audiobook with you. Contact with sunlight is ideal for the effects of this exercise.

How It Helps – It will allow you to enter a state of active recovery, lowering stress levels and improving quality of sleep by raising serotonin.

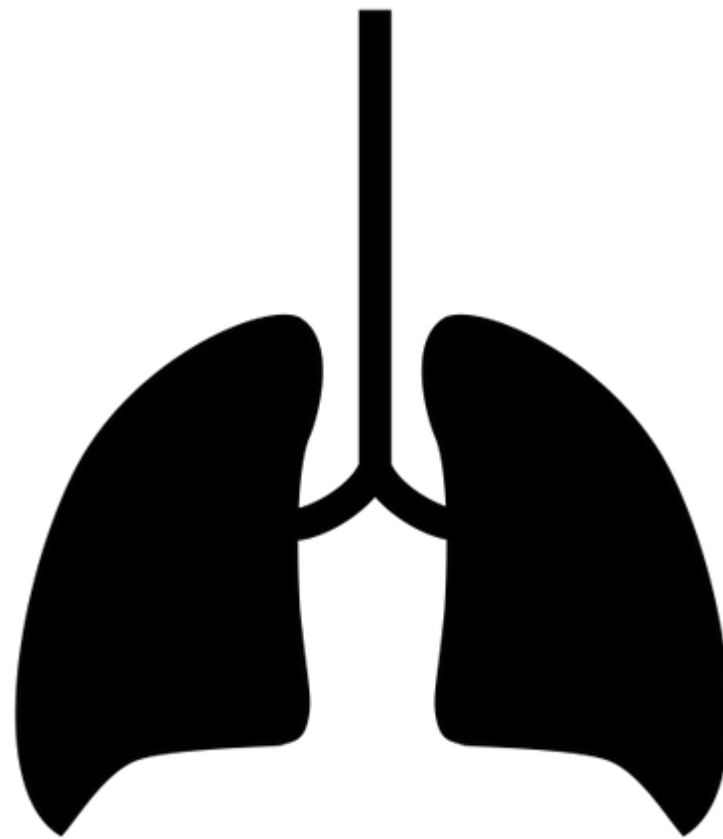
For people working a desk job, this has incredible importance. Office life can mean far too much blue light, and not enough red. You need to be able to get out at some stage of the day and get sun on your face, preferably taking a stroll through a natural environment. It's been shown by research to significantly reduce stress markers in the body.

Catching early morning light will also get the body to start producing more serotonin, which over the next 12 hours will convert melatonin, the sleep hormone that controls sleep cycles. It's just the matter of judging where you can weave it into your routine.

If you're picking yourself up at 5:00 and having to jump in the car by 5:30, it doesn't leave room for a methodical morning routine. So for some, it might be better to walk on your lunch break after a meal, or in the evening as you wind down for bed.

HABIT 3

DEEP BREATHING



Deep Breathing Cycles Throughout The Day

Alternative – Breathe in for 4 seconds. Hold for 7. Out for 8. Repeat for 3 rounds. Use liberally throughout the day.

Summary – 2 / 3.5 / 4. If you're turning purple with the initial exercise.

How It Helps – By lowering your heart rate, your ability to think clearly and maintain composure will be improved. Controlling the spikes of nervousness is crucial in keeping the body from accumulating excessive stress.

How to deal with stress when you're trapped in the moment? Focusing on lengthened breaths is the easiest way to lower your nervous system down from its panicked state, simply by managing the physical symptoms.

Even if you're not susceptible to bouts of anxiety, executing this allows you to slow the heart rate and improve the brain's ability to focus on a situation and think clearly without the usual noise. And for insomniacs, it's a proven way to bore the body into finally falling asleep.

Heart Rate Variability (HRV), the change in the length between beats, will improve with the practice of deep breathing and meditation. This measurement shows the ability of the parasympathetic system to pull the body out of fight-or-flight, which is precisely the reason we'd be using slow and deliberate breaths.

4 / 7 / 8 might be uncomfortably long for you, in which case it can be shortened to 2 / 3.5 / 4. As long as the ratio stays the same, the routine will work. Make sure as you draw the air in, the belly fills up first, then building up into the chest. If you struggle to follow this, lie on your back, place a book over the stomach, and raise it up as you breathe in.

An excellent time to use deep breathing would be when you need to 'change your hat'. Switching your persona to suit the incoming situation. If you're about to head through the gym doors: Breathe to become the person who wants to crush weight. And again when you're heading back from work to your family, as you swap to a persona that's a little less angry.

HABIT 4

FASTING



No Food or Drink after 7PM

Alternative – Start the Fast 3 Hours Before Bedtime

Summary – Don't eat or drink calories in the evening. If your hunger is building towards disaster, either have a few rice cakes, or choose to somehow survive and make a point to add more fats and protein to your last meal.

How It Helps – This strategy will lower your chances of making unhealthy food choices, as decision making naturally declines through the latter end of the day. Sleep quality will also be improved when the body's not having to digest and repair at the same time.

Intermittent Fasting, or Feeding Windows as I'd like to frame them, can be an incredible tool for self-regulating the diet. The classic form is to finish your last meal by 8PM and stick to water and black beverage till 12AM, allowing a fast of 16 hours. That can then be progressed steadily over the weeks towards 20 hours of self-induced starvation.

The settled structure will allow you to commit to the routine and gradually improve your tolerance to hunger and cravings. It reduces inflammation in the stomach by giving it much needed time off, and can be used to target stomach fat by providing a window where insulin isn't there to act as a brake on the burning process.

A morning without breakfast can feel lousy initially, and spikes in hunger will be inevitable around the expected meal time, but the brain will adjust to the new pattern within the 14 day adaptation period I've set out.

But I'll leave the morning side out of the frame, and concentrate on simply dropping food intake in the evenings. It doesn't need to be a 16 hour fast. You could simply stop eating at 7 and having your first at 7, making it simply 12 hours of abstinence, a feat most will be able to make without going into glucose depleted seizures.

Dropping late night meals will see the largest change, as this is where you're more likely to succumb to cravings and make an unplanned raid on the corner shop. This can also have the knock-on effect of ruining your chances of a good night's sleep, as the body now has to divert resources from recovery towards digestion.

This will feel like an impossible proposition to some, who will have to break tradition and fight past the gravitational pull of a planet to get past the late hours. But the more often you can make it through to the morning, the lesser the urge will be on the next go. 14 days will be more than enough to weather the worst of it.

HABIT 5

DIMMING BLUE LIGHTS



Reducing Blue Light Exposure after 8PM

Alternative – Start 2 Hours Before Bedtime

Summary – The light from your many screens disrupt the circadian rhythm and therefore, sleep. Try to abstain from electronics in the last hour after 9pm, install apps that filter out the light and consider wearing blue light blocking glasses for the three hour period.

How It Helps – Ensure that you'll be able to sleep within minutes of hitting the hay, and improve the amount of deep sleep you're getting. Subsequently you can expect better energy in the day, and repair sunk hormones like testosterone, which replenish when allowed enough downtime.

It's always worth noting that humans haven't physiologically evolved far from the counterparts from prehistory. Which puts us at odds with ourselves in modern times. We're now living in an artificial environment, while still holding onto natural inclinations. When the sun descends, the body starts to sedate itself and wind down. At this point we should be asleep within an hour or two.

Except there's a burgeoning pile of modern techniques for keeping the brain wired and extending wakefulness beyond the natural cycle. A lot of it is self-induced.

The brain is always producing melatonin, a hormone responsible for helping you enter deep sleep. The light from electronics emit wavelengths that inhibit the production of this hormone. Even if you make it to bed on time, this suppressive effect will prevent you from waking fully rested. Finding ways of reducing that exposure will give you a route to fixing insomnia.

The simplest solution would be to drop those devices for an hour prior to bedtime. Dimming the screen doesn't do much to stop those waves from still reaching your eyes. Find some other way to keep yourself busy. Read a book. Head outside for a walk. Prep for the morning ahead. Any plan that doesn't involve staring at these screens till you fall asleep.

Roll an hour back to 8pm and you should already be making changes to limit exposure. An app like f.lux can be installed on the laptop or phone, reducing eye strain and blue light impact. Blocking glasses are also useful at helping filter out the wavelengths, as long as you're happy to risk the funky look.

HABIT 6

MEAL PREP



Make Meals Ahead of Time

Alternative – It doesn't have to be daily. Tick the box on the sheet if you have already prepped your meals at a previous time and don't need to do it on the day.

Summary – Cook multiple meals in an hour at least once per week.

Example – Breakfast – Skipped

Lunch – Chicken & Sweet Potato with Salad and Olive Oil Dressing

Dinner – 10% Beef Stir Fry with Mixed Veg and Quinoa

Freeze or Fridge in Multiple Containers

How It Helps – Save the time for the working week ahead of you by finishing the kitchen business early. When we're tired or hungry, the food selection is not going to look so healthy. Pick them out when you still make rational choices.

This is the cornerstone for navigating a diet past the pitfalls of busy schedules, ill-timed cravings, and general laziness. Put an hour aside, get all the ingredients assembled under your roof, and make enough food to last you through a famine. Or 4-7 servings. If you're really stuck for time, go for the option of cooking for the entire week in one go. Keep some freezer space on standby.

If you're able to get by without needing constant variety, if you can cope with some monotony in your diet, this makes things easier. Cook 2-3 separate meals over the session. If you go over an hour, don't sweat it, the prep just needs more practice and you'll have plenty of that.

Prepping breakfast is dependant on whether you're adding fasting to the mix. Dinner is a must. You're setting yourself up for a fall if you're getting home after a tough day at work, and having to then conjure up a meal from scratch. When we're tired, we make bad decisions, ones that might involve a late night takeaway.

You don't have to be scouring for foods that will perfect your diet. That's a mission better saved for further down the road. Before you can become the best pilot, you need to simply learn how to get the wheels to leave the ground. Now it's just about cooking efficiently.

Keep it simple. One ingredient each of lean protein, fat, and carbs. Pick a light calorie sauce, or make that your fat contribution. Pile some vegetables on top, and there's a meal that's easy to make in huge portions.

Variety and flavour can be found in swapping in new seasonings and sauces to compliment the base foods. Give yourself a license to experiment. Throw things at the pan and see what sticks. There might be a crockpot recipe to come that will be your legacy.

HABIT 7

SLEEP



10PM Bedtime

Alternative – Sleep for at least 7 Hours a day, ideally 8.

Summary – Set yourself a regular sleep schedule that allows the body to settle into a pattern that induces drowsiness at the right time and promotes longer deep sleep.

How It Helps – Fix issues with insomnia and restless nights by letting the body sync up with its internal clock. At the same time, there will be a space now in the morning for taking care of tasks while energy and productivity is higher.

This can be the make or break scenario for your deep dive into habit change. We're tackling an issue that has the ability to interfere with any biological process in the body. Chronically impaired sleep will reduce testosterone, raise cortisol, lower metabolism, amongst a host of changes that you're probably not keen on experiencing.

That's simply looking at the physical symptoms. Low quality sleep as been shown to increase procrastination in people that struggle to keep things in order, which makes most of us. Trying to lose weight or build meaningful muscle while running off 5 hours of sleep on a good day, that's an unlikely scenario.

Since we're meant to be spending a third of our lifetimes stuck in this mode, it should be trained and improved just like any other skill. It's a chance to resurrect the body to its best capacity, vastly improving your productivity. At it's best, it will feel like a superpower. Because there's a good chance that you're currently sitting on the rough end of it, and operating way below your healthy capacity.

Sleep management is a matter of quality on top of quantity. Adding up the hours isn't quite enough if you're looking to ensure you're waking with a chance of landing on your feet. 12PM till 8AM might add up to holy grail of 8 hours, but you might still find yourself waking up feeling disgruntled.

The reason for is the circadian rhythm, the internal clock that regulates the pattern of sleeping and waking. This matches the day night cycle for at least 50% of people. Meaning that going to be within a few hours after sunset will result in the body going through deeper sleep. I've set the marker at 10PM, from which 7 hours of sleep will likely result in a stronger morning.

This won't work for everyone, but it's worth the experiment that 14 days will allow. That's the reason I've set it within a relatively short period for habit change. The reason we consider ourselves to be early birds and night owls, is because the circadian rhythm can vary beyond the day night cycle.

50% will occupy the median line, but there will be outliers who respond better to earlier or later bedtimes. So conceivably you might be best off with a late night and a late morning. But attempting the 10PM schedule will give you a longer morning with an opportunity to start the day with intent. Even if you don't feel like being an early riser, it might well be an assembly of poor habits that cause you to wake with storm clouds in your head.

14 Days and Beyond

I've set this plan within the confines of a short deadline, just so that it makes for a simpler challenge. Because that's the whole idea of it. Small scale changes that can pack big punches. Delving more into the windows of training and aspects of dieting turns it a more complicated scenario that requires more upheaval.

So the goal posts are set down for the 14 day mark. Hold up every habit as often as you can, it doesn't have to be every day, and I wouldn't expect it to be. If you're practicing each at least 4 days out of 7, you're ahead of the mark.

Habit change can take 50 days to become truly entrenched within a routine, but a fortnight will still be enough to get the ball rolling. You'll have figured out how to make space for each practice, and the boost each provides will be apparent in your day game.

At the end of these two weeks, you'll have the option of keeping a hold on all 7 moving forward, or lessening the load with a few dropouts. Which you can choose to lose is up to you. Some can be easily downregulated to once or twice per week, with meal prep being a likely option. It might make for a simpler diet if you can stick with a few monster cooking sessions that let you coast through the rest of the week.

Others like morning walks can be substituted for a similar option that still provides strong doses of movement and sunlight. Like taking the bike to work instead, if it's only 20-30 minutes away. Make adjustments when necessary that better gel with your lifestyle and you'll be able to amass a series of habits that stick around and earn their keep.

The Next Layer

Five Steps of the Genesis Trail

- 1. Fast - Eliminate Hunger**
- 2. Focus - Control the Brain**
- 3. Fuel - Feed the Workout**
- 4. Train - Monster Volume**
- 5. Sleep - Win The Night**

Assuming some of these habits are allowed to linger and bed themselves in, you now have the foundation from which you can build your fitness journey from. They also will act as a safety net for when motivation dwindles or an injury strikes. Keeping a grip on the parasympathetic workings of the body will allow you to still keep a consciously positive routine throughout turmoil, enabling a quick restart to the gym and diet when the clouds settle. It's just a matter of being able to hold stress at an arm's length.

Now we come to the next step of the health initiative. The training and diet are where most people choose to start, but here it acts the second stage. You've got a firm hold on the routine, and the benefits are starting to leak in. It's time to begin the push.

In Genesis Fitness, I stick with a monster volume style that keeps muscle building as the primary goal. It is a formula of technique, force, and consistency. This type of attention to detail can feel excessive if all you want to do is get your hands on a barbell and dial it up. But sticking by control carries the promise of muscle that continues to arrive freely, fat loss that doesn't bottom out early, and training that doesn't punish you beyond your ability to recover.

Intermittent fasting is my company's flagship diet. At least two thirds of the day are spent without food, and the rest are based on meals that prime the body with energy. It's an efficient fat burning state that supports caloric deficits and insulin re-sensitisation without carrying the potential downsides that come with prolonged spells of abstinence. It's not there to pose as a miracle cure that will work for anyone, but it can be the solution to many classic problems of weight loss.

Habit tracking and mindfulness are engaged from the beginning of this programme, and it will continue to play a key role. By running lifestyle promoting habits in the background, you'll gain the ability to control the night and the morning, giving you better levels of motivation and energy to bring the fight to the gym and dietary temptation.

This is where mind meets matter. Keeping actions in your day that stimulate the mindful part of the brain, managing stress levels and giving greater levels of focus going forward. When you string all of these elements together, you have the potential for taking physique change to a different level.

There are plenty of articles on my website that describe and cover the five steps of the Genesis Trail. These features are in place to build up to the goal that was initiated by this book. To elevate the body to dominate across both physical and mental performance.

I provide both online and in-person programmes for those who'd like to work towards their ultimate healthy body. With either option, you'll be able to progress through the five steps with the following.

Training Programmes – An interactive, optimised training programme that fits your schedule and takes you through 8-12 weeks of increasing intensity. You'll be able to log your weights within the programme, and track them as you make consistent gains in strength and endurance.

Diet Plan – A sample week's meal sheet customised for your individual requirements, that will act as a template for your food strategy.

Habit Log – A continuation of the habit sheet supplied with this eBook, that will enable you to load up on action items that further your lifestyle and goals. This will be the base for sleep, stress, and lifestyle overhaul going forward.

Tracking – Weekly and monthly measurements are taken to ensure that you notice changes and don't leave it up to what to you might subjectively notice in the mirror. Because that moment may never arrive if you're looking too closely.

Call, Text and Email Support – Before you make any drastic decisions that end in calamity, it would probably be better if we talk it over first.

To take on a programme, or chase up on further reading, head to my website:
<https://www.genesisfitness.live/>