

A Letter to a Friend



I had a long-time friend reach out to me for help with his weight and health. Specifically he wanted to know what I had done over the years.

This was actually a difficult question, as the easy answer is to simply list what I'm currently doing, since this would be 'the shiny new object' currently in my brain ;)

However, with some reflection I came up with what I believe to be an accurate reflection of the the last decade or two of my life in fitness...

Hey Bud,

Sorry this took so long, I really wanted to go through my notes to see what I have done over the last few decades, as opposed to what I'm doing right now.

I think I have a solid answer for you ;)

Firstly, My body fat is usually between 10-15% via DEXA.

Looks lower in pics, but I think that's just deep abs, and a decent amount of muscle making me look leaner.

Secondly, I really don't do much and I think that's the trick.

I learned early on we can only really track a handful of metrics otherwise we spin our wheels, chase shiny objects and never really get anywhere.

So my metrics have always been: My Weight, My Waist, My Shoulders.

At my height (5'10") my weight should be roughly 163-177 pounds. It's a range because your weight can fluctuate a lot, and these fluctuations themselves are not a good indicator of exactly what's going on with your body...

To get these numbers I use the following equation:

Starting with 100 pounds at 5 foot tall add 7 pounds per inch, with a plus or minus 7 for the range at each height

After weight I focus on my waist as a measure of body fatness.

My waist should be no more than half my height (so 35 inches is my cut off)

Then my shoulders as a measure of muscle mass.

My Shoulders should be no less than 70% of my height (so 49 inches)

So my height is 70 inches

Based on this I do the following:

If my waist starts getting higher than I'd like and my weight is sneaking up, I lower how much I'm eating and walk more. I'll move [my fasting](#) from once per week to once every 3 to 5 days.

If my shoulder circumference starts getting low I focus on my training.

If my body weight starts dipping close to that 163 mark I ease back on training and/or move my fasting back to once per week.

I only do this until my weight and waist and shoulders are back to where I like them, then I go back to a normal amount of eating and training.

So I think the trick is - I'm always course correcting.

It's kind of like sailing, never a straight line, always zig zagging towards your destination.

For actual eating, I do two things of note...

I eat about 100 grams of protein per day, 40 of which comes from a daily protein shake.

And I eat [a LOT of fruit](#).

That's it... well, a fair amount of chocolate too. :)

I have two espresso in the morning, one at 8:30 AM one at 9:00 AM while I'm writing.

I drink alcohol occasionally, maybe 2 drinks a week during the winter months, maybe 3-4 during the summer (really just July and August here in Canada)

As a family we don't eat out much, maybe pizza delivery every other week, go a restaurant maybe every other week too.

It's all pretty mundane really, no magic, no consistent style of eating, I just constantly course correct.

I bulked once in my life, getting up to 216 pounds, realized any of the lean mass gains wasn't really muscle, and that most of the weight gain was fat mass and I felt like hell so never did that again.

So I resist the urge to eat more in an attempt to gain muscle.

I've dieted once to around 8% body fat, realized there really was no point to being that lean so never did it again.

So really, it's just a 10-12 pound swing that's always manageable because it's never too far gone, just small course corrections.

The trick is getting into that range and finding what is comfortable for you.

I'm a thinner build than you, so for you I'd start any calculations with 5 foot and 107 (really helpful if you know how much you actually weighed when you were 5 foot, around 11 or 12 years old most likely).

Then, you're also more muscular than me so I'd maybe consider adding 7 pounds to the final weight.

So if you were 5'10" it would probably be more like 177-191 pounds.

But really, I think the trick is ignoring most other things out there. There's

simply too much to focus on.

I workout 2-4 times per week, more in the summer, less in the winter.

During the Summers I'll workout outside whenever possible, pushing or pulling a weighted sled or throwing medicine balls.

Winters I'm in the gym lifting weights, nothing revolutionary or fancy.

I also [sauna 4-5 times a week](#), but that's only been in the last 5 years.

I've tried just about every dietary intervention I have come across and none really moved the needle enough to be worth the effort.

Lots of fruit, [100 grams of protein](#). I walk, I train, and I don't really stress about any thing other than those 4 things and remembering to drink enough water when I'm working ;)

That's it.

Hopefully this helps, not a lot of magic, but I think chasing magic is what gets a lot of people in trouble.

B

.

Date: 2023-04-10
Words: 960
Time to read: 4 mins

[Newer](#)

[Older](#)

10th April 2023
The start of Modern Intermitten...

7th April 2023
Why we Should Walk Daily

Brad Pilon © 2022-2025

[Archive](#) [RSS feed](#)

Made with [Montaigne](#) and [bigmission](#) 