
THE CrossFit LIFE

Fit Forever

Chris Long started out with a goal of being fit by 50. Then he discovered CrossFit and found a new goal: he wants to be fit now—and forever.

By Chris Long

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Courtesy of CrossFit Fresno

What in the world am I doing? I of all people don't belong here . . . I am not an athlete in any sense of the word!

Those negative thoughts raced through my head over and over, with a few expletives for good measure, as I walked into CrossFit Fresno in December 2011 to start my first foundation class. I was the king of excuses when it came to taking care of myself physically. Too tired, too much work to finish, too fat, too much to do at home and on and on.

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Jeffrey Sherman



The author before (left) and after CrossFit.

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My health was at its worst. I took pills for all sorts of things. The blood-test results from my physical in December were not good, Not to mention I weighed 256 lb. I was snoring like a freight train at night. I woke up frequently, I'm sure because I had sleep apnea. I would drive to work so tired I felt like I could fall back asleep.

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Before walking in, I spent several minutes in my car contemplating driving home instead. But there I was, filling out a waiver, figuring out how to answer a question about my current non-existent workout routine and looking through a window at the 5 p.m. class lifting all sorts of weights and tossing medicine balls high in the air.

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Rosanna grabbed my waiver and immediately noticed I left the workout-routine question blank and asked me pointedly, "Well, what's your current routine? You left that question blank." She caught me right away!

I sheepishly told her, "Um, I walk my dog in the morning and at night."

She said, "Then put it down. That works."

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I soon had my butt in the seat of the rowing machine, learning how to move my legs, rear and arms in a fluid movement. That was comical.

"Where's the elliptical machine?" I thought. "That one's easy for me to figure out." Then there were squats.

"Yikes, Jon, what do you mean, 'Go lower'?"

And push-ups, I think I did my last push-up in eighth grade to earn my Presidential fitness patch. That was 1978.

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I kept coming, barely making it through the foundations classes. I couldn't even run around the first half of the parking lot without stopping two times. Rosanna ran with me, stopped with me, talked with me and encouraged me to keep pushing through. The final chipper almost did me in. I remember jumping rope was so hard. I did one every 10 or so seconds. But I made it through and was ready to graduate to the daily classes.

I was extremely apprehensive about doing the daily WODs with the true CrossFitters. How would I keep up? What I found was a community at CrossFit Fresno that is not like anything I'd experienced before.

New thoughts began replacing the old ones.

I can't wait to go to CrossFit Fresno. I of all people belong here, and I am an athlete in every sense of the word!



Courtesy of CrossFit Fresno

Long lost 75 lb. and discovered a supportive, welcoming community at CrossFit Fresno.



Everyone was so nice, encouraging and helpful. I couldn't wait to come back each day. The endorphins started kicking in. I quickly moved from three days a week to six. My new addiction quickly spread to my wife, Kathy. She was soon on her CrossFit Fresno path, and it opened up a whole new facet to our relationship.

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Conversations at the box led to information about the Paleo Diet, so my research began. Kat and I decided to give it a try. It made so much sense. I'd sought out the wrong food for years. It was rough, but I knew my sugar addiction needed to stop, and I needed to know how to make smart food choices so that it all worked in conjunction with my exercise. Paleo has clicked with me ever since starting to eat that way in January.

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The relationships I've developed at the box over the last eight months have been so special to me. Jon, Rosanna and each and every member of the CrossFit Fresno family have made a huge difference in my journey. I started out with the mantra that I wanted to be "fit by 50." I gave myself two years. But I have come to realize that my mantra is actually that I want to be "fit forever." And I will be, thanks to CrossFit.

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I had my blood work rechecked recently, and what was a wacky bunch of numbers is now perfectly normal. I'm off all the medications I was taking and as of this morning have lost 75 lb. I've gone from 256 lb. to 181 lb. I feel the best I have ever in my life, and it just keeps getting better with each WOD.

Jon, Rosanna and everyone at CrossFit Fresno, thank you from the bottom of my heart for being my fellow athletes and for your constant encouragement. I'm there for each you as well along your journey and truly enjoy our time together inside and outside the box.

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