



The University of Texas at Austin

Physical Activity Plan



healthyhorns

University Health Services
healthyhorns.utexas.edu

Division of Student Affairs

Cardiovascular Exercise Options

Intensity	Activities	Days Per Week	Time
Low You can speak and sing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walking Swimming (recreationally) Hiking Sports: tennis doubles, volleyball Walking up stairs Biking (below 10 mph) Dancing (ballroom, line) Light jogging Yoga 		
Moderate You can have a conversation but cannot sing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Running/Sprinting Lap swimming Bicycling (10+ mph) Sports: tennis singles, soccer, basketball, lacrosse Martial Arts/Boxing Interval Training Rowing Circuit weight training Aerobic dancing Vigorous calisthenics 		
High You can not say more than a few words without gasping for breath			

Strength Exercise Options

Intensity	Activities	Days Per Week	Time
New	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bodyweight: Intro yoga, Intro Pilates, Machines: Cables and weight machines Weightlifting: 8-12 repetitions 		
Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bodyweight: Middle yoga, Middle Pilates, Bootcamp workouts Weightlifting: Vary repetitions 		
Advanced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bodyweight: Gymnastics movements, Advanced yoga and Pilates, plyometrics, intense circuits Weightlifting: Olympic lifts, power exercises 		

Weekly Plan

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Exercise Type							
Sample Plan	5pm: 30 min run	11 am: 30 min weights	7:30 pm: IM soccer game	Rest day	11 am: 30 min weights	1 pm: outdoor activity/ yoga	Rest or light jog/walk

Cardiovascular Intensity Level Tips

How will cardiovascular exercise be helpful?

- **Physical:** Increases energy and prevents some diseases by lowering heart rate and blood pressure. Improves sleep too as well as insulin sensitivity.
- **Mental:** Reduce stress and improves your mood while building confidence.
- **Performance:** Makes your hearts and lungs even more efficient to improve stamina. Presents a fun challenge that many students enjoy. Decreases body fat percentage.

How much exercise should I be doing?

Any amount of exercise is better than none and will provide some benefit. You'll see additional benefits with additional activity levels. Try to spread the activities out throughout the week rather than just on the weekend. See page 1 for activity examples.

- **Low:** Aim for 4-6 days of 20-60 minutes.
- **Moderate:** 150 minutes a week spread over 4-6 days with each of these days having 20-60 minutes. Minutes can be done in a continuous session or broken up into sessions lasting at least 10 minutes.
- **High Intensity:** 75 minutes per week over 3-4 days having 20-45 minutes per session. You can also do a combination of intensity levels and times.

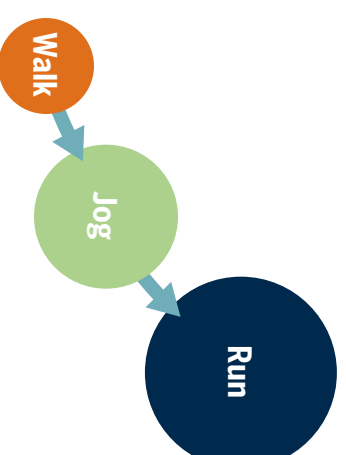
Simple Daily Life Changes:

- Take the stairs instead of the elevators when the class is on the 5th floor or lower.
- Try walking to class instead of taking the bus.
- Every time you pass a water fountain, take a sip. You'd be surprised how much this adds up throughout the day!
- If you drive to school, park a little farther away from the building. It will add a few more steps to and from your car. Your car will also be less at risk for dings!
- Schedule times to be active in your calendar.

If I decide to move up intensity levels, how do I know that I am ready?

- **Low to Moderate:** When you're used to at least 20 minutes of low intensity 3-5 times a week and feel confident about upping the intensity
 - » Try normal activities at a faster pace with a 5-10 minute cool down at the end.
 - » Gradually increase the number of days of moderate intensity and put low intensity exercise between the moderate days. You can find new activities in this resource guide.
 - **Moderate to High:** When you feel good about doing 30 minutes of medium intensity 3-5 times a week
 - » Increase your speed while decreasing the work out duration (this saves you time too).
 - » Complete a warm up as well as a cool down at the end. Stretching after will help keep joints healthy.
- High intensity can cause soreness that decreases over time. Since the recovery time is longer, perform high intensity on alternating days when starting out. Rest days are great for low-moderate intensity. This doesn't have to be your goal all the time. Other intensities are great too! Find what you enjoy.

Sample of Intensity Levels



Strength Training and More Workout Tips

What do I get out of doing strength training? Will it make me inflexible or bulky?

More energy, a positive mood, achieving a new skill, and stronger muscles and bones. You can see performance gains pretty quickly as you get stronger after a few weeks or just a couple sessions per week.

It is a myth that strength training will make you stiff or bulky. Actually, performing strength training with a full range of motion improves your mobility. People who gain a significant amount of “bulk” are also consuming a large number of calories to fuel their weight gain. The difference in testosterone levels between men and women typically make it very difficult for women to gain substantial mass.

What type of exercises should I be doing?

Exercises that work multiple muscles and joints at once (ex. pushups and pullups work muscles around your shoulder and elbow joints; squats and lunges work muscles around your knees, hips, and ankles) are the most efficient way to build strength and have the best carryover with real world activities. Also, working all sides of your **body equally** (right and left, upper and lower, front and back) keeps your body balanced.

How can I learn proper form?

Familiarizing yourself with the movements is key to building confidence and getting the most out of your strength training. UT offers multiple opportunities to learn exercise form through a [Physical Education class](#), [Personal training](#), or [group exercise](#).

You can also check out books about exercise at the [Health Promotion Lending Library](#), watch [videos](#), or use apps such as [Swork It](#).

At first the gym may seem intimidating, but know that everyone started out unfamiliar with exercises that they had to learn. Plus, other students are paying attention to their own workout, so there is not a spotlight on you. [Channel your focus on doing your best with the exercises](#). You can always ask a question to the desk staff or ask someone to give you a spot on a lift. Start with light weight to perfect your form and keep you safe; accelerate your progress as you get stronger.

What if I am strapped for time?

Circuit training or High-Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) builds strength and improves your

[cardiovascular fitness](#). Circuit training involves performing a series of exercises back to back with little or no rest in-between followed by a rest period. An example is performing 15 reps of squats, pushups, lunges, and burpees and resting for 45 seconds before repeating. HIIT is spurts of exercise alternated with rest. An example is all out sprinting for 30 seconds, then walking for 60 seconds, repeating this 4 to 5 times. HIIT workouts can be performed with most exercise types including cycling, running, swimming, and even group exercise classes. RecSports offers HIIT and Circuit Training type workouts in their Tabata and conditioning classes.

Before starting a HIIT workout, make sure you are comfortable performing the exercises with good form and have built up your aerobic fitness. [7-Minute Workout](#) and [7-Minute Advanced Workout App](#) is a quick workout that can be done and also used to build up to other HIIT workouts. 5 PM to 8 PM is the busiest time at the UT Austin gyms so if you're pressed for time, try visiting on different hours.



Can I do strength training without lifting weights?

Yes! Using weights for strength training is common because it is easy to identify how to progress a movement, add more weights. However, bodyweight exercises can build strength and there are tweaks to make them easier or more challenging such as making them single-leg (ex. lunges) or single-arm or performing the movement quickly (ex. squat jumps).

[Prefer a class or group environment?](#) Yoga, Pilates, Nike Training Club, and circuit style classes all incorporate bodyweight exercises that increase strength in a fun, group environment. Check out the options available on the [UT RecSports website](#).

How much should I be doing?

A consistent and well-designed strength training schedule will improve your strength, power, and endurance. For those new to resistance training, [2-3 times a week](#) will help you achieve these benefits. It is recommended to start with 8-12 repetitions of an exercise for 1-3 sets for the major muscle groups to build strength and power. Once you have built up your strength and endurance, you can explore different rep ranges and speeds. Make sure that you remain in control of your body and the weight throughout the movement.

- Muscle Strength: 5-8 repetitions
- Muscle Endurance: 15-20 repetitions

How do I know when I can bump up the weight?

When you are able to perform one more repetition than the top end for every set of the rep range (ex. 20 repetitions if your goal is muscular endurance), you can progress to slightly more weight or a more advanced version of the exercise. This typically involves bumping up by the smallest increment (e.g. 2%-10%) of the weight you were using for the exercise.

How do I warm up?

Hint: it is not bending over to touch your toes and holding. This does nothing to get you ready for the workout and [holding stretches for a long time before a workout can reduce strength and lead to injury](#). Instead, you want to get blood flowing to your muscles so do [dynamic stretching](#) to loosen up your muscles before cardio or strength training. Five minutes of jumping jacks, lunges with a twist (rotate upper body at the bottom of the lunge), arm circles, and leg swings or this [five minute warm up](#) featuring squat jumps, high kicks and knees, and a “T” Push Up (rotate to one side on the upward part of the push up) will have you ready to go.

How do I recover?

Proper recovery is important to help you continue to improve performance and prevent injuries from over training. Putting in active rest days in your schedule where you engage in light activity such as going for a walk, light yoga, or stretching allows your body to recover. Stretching the muscles you have been working enhances your mobility and improves posture which allows you to be more efficient and get in a better position when performing the exercises. You can also give yourself a massage using a [foam roll](#) to improve range of motion. Eating a meal of carbs with some protein within 30 min-2 hours after the workout is important in [replenishing your body with the fuel it needs](#) for proper repair after a workout.



Workout Nutrition Tips

Matching your nutrition to your workouts can help fuel your body for exercise and recovery to improve performance. Low intensity exercise usually does not require anything more than water but for more intense exercise, the chart below provides guidance on different snack ideas for energy and refueling. Each person may have different preferences and tolerances for food before exercise. **Your workout nutrition is part of an overall nutrition plan that includes a variety of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, fish, lean meats, poultry, eggs, beans, nuts and dairy.** Vegetarians can substitute a combination of grains, beans, seeds, and nuts along with soy to meet their protein needs. For individualized nutrition plans, check out [UHS Nutrition Services](#) and [University Housing and Dining](#). Additional information is



available from the [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics](#).

Timing	Nutrients Needed	Examples
Pre (Within 2 hrs. of starting workout)	Fluids help to prevent dehydration. Carbohydrates provide energy and protein fuels muscle repair. Food should be easily digestible. The closer you eat to your workout the quicker the food needs to be broken down.	If exercising within 2-3 hours of eating <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Whole wheat toast, eggs, and low-fat cheese● Yogurt, fruit, and some flaxseeds or granola● Apple and peanut butter● Banana with milk If exercising within 1 hour of eating <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Small fruit smoothie● Grapes and/or orange● Sports drink or vegetable drink
During	Workout under an hour: Water replace fluid loss from sweating. Workout over an hour: Water plus potentially a carbohydrate and electrolyte source to meet energy demands and replace electrolytes lost while sweating.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Water● Sports drink● Banana● Dried fruit
Post (Within 2 hrs. of finishing workout)	Carbohydrates to restore energy reserves and shuttle protein into the muscles combined with protein to repair and rebuild muscle tissue. Aim for about a 3:1 ratio of carbs to protein to repair and rebuild muscle tissue. Appropriate for resistance training, interval/high intensity training, or endurance training (including moderate intensity). Casual exercise like walking or biking to school does not require post-workout recovery.	Liquid Options <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Chocolate milk● Strawberry-banana smoothie with protein source Whole Food Options <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Yogurt and fruit● Turkey sandwich● Peanut butter sandwich

Setting Yourself Up for Success

Enjoyment

The best workouts are the ones you enjoy doing. This can take trying out a few different types of activities or even the same one a few times to find out. Specific workouts focus on producing a certain result (e.g. yoga builds flexibility, sprinting builds speed) but the most important thing is to find activities that you look forward to doing. When someone is in the middle of working out, they place importance on the intrinsic and immediate benefits, such as a feeling of accomplishment, relieving stress, and fun. Focusing on activities that deliver these feelings for you will help you maintain your workout schedule and achieve any other goals coming from consistent exercise.

Make it Meaningful

Connect physical activity to what you care about. If you value time with friends, you can invite some friends to go for a walk/run or join a student or join a student organization where members are active. Involving friends or family not only helps you follow through with the workout but also can add a fun and supportive element.

Scheduling

You plan on going to the gym but then an assignment takes a little longer than expected, a phone call takes extra time, and now you are late to dinner with friends so there isn't time to exercise.

Look at your calendar and select certain days of the week and even times when you will perform that activity. This way you are making time to be active and can plan on getting everything else you need to finish done. Look at the "Sample Plan" on the cover to see how simple creating a schedule can be.



Make Physical Activity Easier to Do

Wear workout clothes or pack them in your bag and use a locker. Planning exercise time for when your classes are close to one of the gyms or recreation areas, or even deciding to add an extra few minutes to your walk home (since you are already walking) are both simple ways to make it easier to be active. Taking a Physical Education class makes it easier to have allotted time for physical activity. Being a part of an active student organization is a great social outlet and way to get connected with friends who are active. You can search the [Get Active](#), [Get Involved Guide](#) and [Hornslink](#) to find clubs with a sports or physical activity focus.

Forming a Habit: Setting a Cue, Reward, and Routine

Say the routine is a 20-minute run. A cue would be seeing your workout clothes or setting an alarm at your scheduled run time. Next, pick a reward that you'll give yourself after completing the routine. The rewards can be something extrinsic that you look forward to (ex. a favorite show) but should also include an intrinsic reward you really want (relaxation, feeling energized).

Tying it all together: When I get home from chemistry class on Monday and Wednesday and see my running shoes, I will go for a twenty-minute run with Mike and Mary because it provides me with the opportunity to unwind (watching favorite show after) while also feeling energized with friends (intrinsic reward).

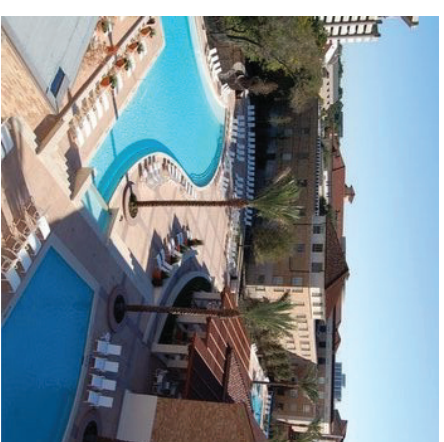
Beyond Pass/Fail

If you miss a day or aren't able to follow-through 100% with your plan, you haven't failed. Don't get discouraged, you can attempt again tomorrow. If you know the days where you tend to feel the most motivated, schedule exercise for these days and use those busy days to work in a short walk to de-stress. Don't have access to a gym over break or prefer to workout somewhere else? Find a few bodyweight exercises you can do. Setting yourself up to be successful involves finding rewards and activities you enjoy and setting aside time for these activities.

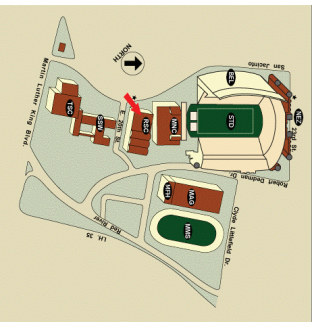
Campus Resources

Facilities

Gregory Gym: The largest recreation center on campus that has basketball, volleyball, racquetball and squash courts. It also has an indoor track as well as cardio and weight rooms. Connected to Gregory Gym is the Aquatic Complex that includes an indoor natatorium, an outdoor lap pool, as well as two other event and leisure pools if the water and sun are your thing. There is more to be found there by checking it out!



ATX Exercise Bucket List



Recreational Sports Center: This building is just south of DKR Stadium across the street from San Jacinto Residence Hall. It has a weight/cardio room, racquetball courts, basketball courts, cycling room, and personal training studio. Accompanying these amenities are table tennis tables and a multi-purpose room upstairs. This building tends to be less crowded than Gregory Gym.

great place to come out and run, play some sports with friends, or even to watch the pickup games going on from the small bleachers on the side.



Cañon Clark Field: Located

right behind Jester East and San Jacinto. This large turf field is surrounded by a jogging track, a hill/stairs for running, and several basketball courts. This is a

Whitaker Fields: This is a giant complex of natural and turf fields in which you can play most any sport you would like. Bring other students with you on a weeknight, weekday, or even at some point on the weekend and you can play whatever you are feeling at the time, and can even find pickup games to join in on!



includes a weight/cardio room, a martial arts room, a dance studio, and four multi-purpose rooms.

Programs

TeXercise/Cycling Classes: With nearly 20 classes each day (Monday-Friday) and some classes on the weekend, TeXercise classes offer a full range of options for various fitness levels. Classes include Yoga, Pilates, dancing and Zumba, kickboxing, kettlebells, circuit training, and interval training as well as Group Cycling. Classes are offered daily at different times to fit with anyone's schedule! The first week of the semester and first Thursday of each month, students can try out TeXercise classes without purchasing a pass.

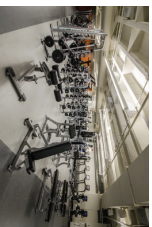
Outdoor Recreation Program: The RecSports Outdoor Recreation Program provides excellent recreational and educational opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts from adventure and service learning trips to an outdoor center with rental equipment, and a climbing wall.

Intramural Sports: RecSports offers many different sports for all experience levels. Any student can sign up for a team! Grab some friends and you can play Basketball, Flag football, Outdoor/Indoor soccer, Softball, Ultimate, Volleyball, and Water Volleyball. The RecSports website has all the sports, schedules, and events.

Personal Training and Small Group Training: RecSports offers a variety of personal training options including individual, buddy, small group (3-5 members), KIN training sessions led by Kinesiology student trainers.

Swimming: Individual and group swimming lessons and classes are available for all different levels from beginners to advanced.

Fitness Institute of Texas (FIT): Conducts fitness assessments as well as exercise and nutrition programs.



Belmont Gym: Inside the football stadium is a multi-leveled facility that



Lady Bird Lake Trail
10 miles of trails border lady bird lake in downtown austin. It's a great area for runners, walkers, and cyclists.

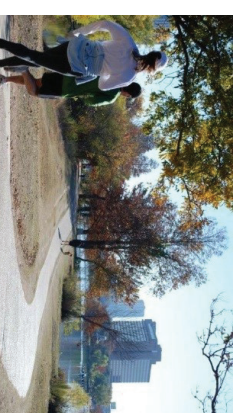


Barton Creek Greenbelt
This popular area in Austin is 7.9 miles long, it begins at Zilker Park and has limestone cliff walls, beautiful scenery, and swimming areas. A treasure for biking, hiking, swimming, climbing, and more.

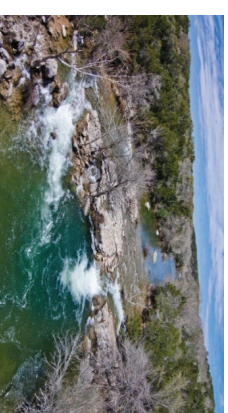


Krause Springs
Located in Spicewood, this is one of the most stunning swimming holes in Texas. You can visit the springs, camp out, or tour the garden.

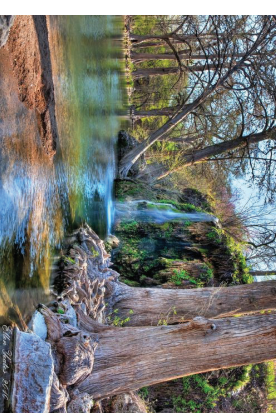
Kayaking, Stand-Up Paddle Board, Canoeing
Rowing Dock Austin is a few minutes from campus and has specials for college students as well!



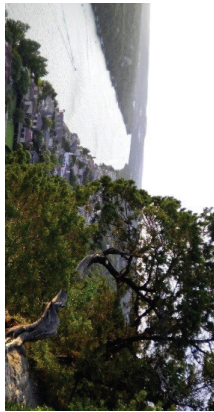
Zilker Park
Just south of downtown, this park's large fields are perfect for a pick-up game of soccer, ultimate, or to settle down for relaxation. There are also sand volleyball courts.



Barton Springs
One of the best places to be on a hot day, Spring fed, the water temperature averages 70 degrees throughout the year and the grassy areas are shaded.

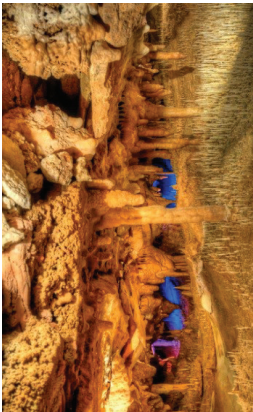


Personalized Monthly Physical Activity Plan



Deep Eddy Pool

The oldest swimming pool in Texas, Deep Eddy has a large lap pool and recreational pool surrounded by grassy relaxation areas. Plus, it's right next to hike and bike trails.



Pease Park

Part of the Shoal Creek Greenbelt just west of campus, Pease Park is an excellent place to explore the running trails, play sand volleyball, or a pick-up game on the field.

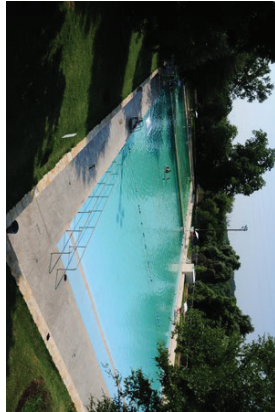


Races

There are 5K's regularly in the Austin area to check out for some new running routes, some variety, and even new friends!

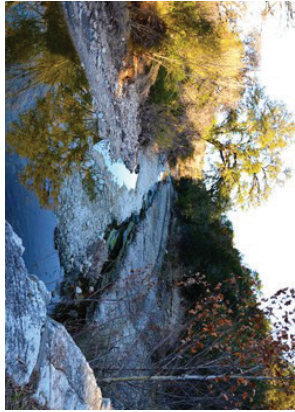
The highest point in Austin at 775 feet. Trail starts at the stairs leading up to Covert park at the top. From there you can see a sweeping view of Austin and hill country.

Mount Bonnell



Located in Georgetown, these caverns offer fun guided tours with natural artwork.

Inner Space Cavern







McKinney Falls State Park

This state park in southeast Austin offers camping, geocaching, picnicing, and bouldering. With nine miles of trails, you can also hike or mountain bike. At Onion Creek, there is swimming and fishing.



	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Week 1							
Week 2							
Week 3							
Week 4							

Tips for Staying Active

Tip	Actions
<p>Get more physical activity done while on campus and in Austin</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Walking, biking, or skating to and from classes ● Take the stairs instead of the elevator ● Get off the bus one stop early ● Weightlifting or resistance exercises ● Cardiovascular exercises like walking, hiking, running, swimming, biking, or dancing ● Follow these safety tips
<p>Get more physical activity with friends</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meet up for a walk or run throughout Austin or on campus ● Playing sports, whether it is an informal pickup game or an intramural sport ● Become involved with a physically active student organization ● Sign-up for an exercise class together like TeXercise, Yoga, or Kickboxing
<p>Break up long bouts of sitting (hour or more)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Take a couple minutes to go for a walk ● Stretch, or just stand up for a few minutes.
<p>Build your physical activity bucket list</p> 	<p>Some of UT students' favorite places and ideas for an active bucket list</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Viewing Austin from Mount Bonnell or the 360 Bridge Area ● Running or walking on the Greenbelt and Hike and Bike Trails ● Kayaking or stand up paddle boarding on Lady Bird Lake ● Participating in an outdoor adventure ● Learn a new sport, activity, or skill

Sample PED Classes for Course Credit

Beginners	Intermediate	All Levels	Advanced
Swim	Swim conditioning	Soccer	Stroke tech & fitness
Social dance	Social dance	Cardio weight training	Social dance
Running	Running	Aerobic walking	Running
Power volleyball	Power volleyball	Body works	Power volleyball
Golf	Golf	Circuit aerobics	
Racquetball	Softball	Weight training	
Handball	Handball	Basketball	
Karate/Tae Kwon Do	Karate/Tae Kwon Do		
Self Defense			
Judo			
Tennis			

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Sources: Duhigg, C. (2012). *The power of habit: Why we do what we do in life and business*. New York: Random House. Markman, A. B. (2014). *Smart change: Five tools to create new and sustainable habits in yourself and others*. New York: Penguin. Ariely, D., & Trower, M. R. (2016). *Payoff: The hidden logic that shapes our motivations*. New York: Ted Books/Simon & Schuster. Segar, M. (2015). *No sweat: How the simple science of motivation can bring you a lifetime of fitness*. New York: AMACOM—American Management Association.