

The **TOP 10** Guiding Principles to develop a sustainable master's program!

The masters athlete class in most sports starts around 30. In CrossFit, the masters classes start at 40. I work with masters athletes at all different levels, fitness/recreational, competitive and elite. It is important for older athletes entering the world of CrossFit to have guidance and perspective on what their goals are, where they are in their fitness development and what is their overall potential. In our box communities (we have 3 CrossFit affiliates), the majority of our masters athletes might be categorized as fitness/recreational, competitive, and there are a handful of more elite athletes.

It's safe to say that many of these athletes don't possess enough self-awareness and knowledge to know when their fitness interventions are producing the right results. They generally know when things are not going well, but they lack the ability or skills to change direction. So, sometimes they just disappear and go back to a passive style of "workout" or they continue forward in pain with poor results, which is not sustainable. If they started Crossfit with a lower fitness level, they see huge gains at first. They can't believe how fit they feel, but then the problems start. They develop enough fitness level and capacity to be dangerous. The high reps, heavy loads and lack of rest adds up.

Waking up in the morning feeling like you were run over by a Mac truck the night before eventually gets old. At some point, you begin to ask yourself, "what the hell am I doing?" You go to the box the next day and all the younger athletes are talking about how their ready to go, and you're still having trouble warming up. Do that for long enough duration and you get discouraged. The body knows when things aren't going well and eventually the "itis" impairs not only performance but daily life.

The challenge with Crossfit, which is different than traditional style training environments, is that athletes of all age ranges train or "compete" aside one another in a class. This can be one of the environmental strengths of Crossfit, but if not governed by a good coach or athlete that knows how to train, the dosage and intervention may be too much for the older athlete. Generally, if you can do it, coaches will let you. This can lead to broken, beaten, and scared athletes. They want to figure out how to "fix" their problem, but the answer is hidden in their lack of direction, focus, awareness and perspective. Masters athletes can use the following 10 principles to create sustainability in their fitness investment.

The logo for 40fit, featuring the number '40' in a large, bold, red font with a white outline, followed by the word 'fit' in a white, italicized font with a black outline. A red star is positioned above the 'i' in 'fit'.

10 Steps for Masters Athletes

1. Find a coach/trainer who wants to train masters athletes and has experience – Show me a coach who is good at what they do, and I will look for tenure in their athletic population.

2. Get involved in a community of “like minded” athletes – It may be a community of similar aged athletes or they may be younger. No matter, be like minded.

3. Decide on your goals and prioritize- Don't take a shotgun approach

4. Measure your abilities and know your strengths and weaknesses –Accept the fact that you are an older machine, not necessarily less capable but older.

5. Develop a plan with short term and long term goals – Start with 1 month, 3 month, 6 month, 1 year goals. Then develop an over reaching sustainable fitness/lifestyle goal.

6. Have a method to measure your progress-Standards, metrics and use science when available.

7. Be aware when your program is not meeting your goals- Face the music when needed. Change direction, get outside advice and make adjustments where needed.

8. Recognize when injury or pain is not promoting your goals- Find a good quality, open minded clinical resource, doctor, DPT, etc...

9. Develop a sense of physical awareness –separate good from bad

10. Have fun and let your fitness enrich your lifestyle- Most importantly our fitness should impact our life in a big way! Not a bad way!

If it's broke, fix it! Working out is not training...
~Coach D

40fit

