

## **Meet Kit Rich: French Fries, Self-Love, and Stair Dancing**

By Samantha Durbin

LA-based fitness professional and celebrity trainer Kit Rich is back with more insight for how to make fit your everyday. Read on to hear her thoughts on extreme workouts, tips for working out with injuries and what to eat between workouts. Then gear up for our exclusive Fit by Kit series this month, based on her “3 or 30” program: 3 miles or 30 minutes every day as a sustainable way to stay active.

**Your “3 or 30” program promotes a less extreme approach to fitness. Does this mean you would advise against extreme workouts?**

If a workout feels extreme for you, it probably is. And your extreme is different than someone else’s extreme. What’s important is understanding your level and honoring it, and sometimes the best way to find that out is doing a more challenging workout. But it’s tricky because starting off hard can deter you from continuing.

I think it’s part of the culture nowadays to want a quick fix. Everything has to happen right away. And if you don’t get results immediately, moving on. Extreme is appealing in that way because it promises a quick change. And in many ways, it does accomplish that. But it doesn’t promise longevity. It’s only a matter of time before you burn out. It creates this perpetuating cycle where people do extreme workouts for a short period, get excited because they see results, then burn out because it’s too much on the body. They stop, gain back weight, get depressed, eat more, then get the courage to try again. The cycle continues. It’s just not a way to live.

What I promote is longevity with a down-to-earth fitness program that 1) avoids burn out, 2) creates a loving relationship between you and your body and, 3) helps you let go of ridiculous standards you may have about your body.

**What are some healthy snacks, either pre or post workout, you recommend using with your “3 or 30” program?**

I’m not a diet expert, but as a general rule, try not to eat anything too heavy before working out. I eat about 1 hour to 30 minutes before. Apples with peanut butter is a favorite. Some Greek yogurt with fruit and nuts provide the perfect mix of protein, fat, and sugar. A simple homemade protein smoothie is ideal. I’m mindful about fruit and usually put blackberries or blueberries in my smoothies; to lessen my sugar intake I’d rather put some coconut oil in a smoothie than another fruit. You can have avocado with hummus on toast.

If you're pressed for time, grab some trail mix or a pre-made hard boiled egg to grab on your way out.

After a work out, you want to make sure you are nourishing your body with some protein. Any option you ate before your workout is okay, but a lean protein should be involved such as eggs, yogurt, chicken, fish, etc.

### **What are some ways you can nurture your body between workouts?**

There are so many hours in the week and numerous ways your can nurture your body, working out is one piece of the wellness pie. You can get massages, stretch, meditate, use a foam roller. Interestingly, journaling is so nourishing for the body because it's therapeutic for the mind, which turns into therapy for the body—mind and body are interconnected. I rest on my days off. Drinking chamomile tea, using a luxurious body scrub in the shower, anything you can do to encourage rest is nurturing.

Eating the right foods is probably the biggest ingredient here. Making sure you are drinking enough water, too. I also believe nurturing is allowing indulgence from time to time, whether it's eating chocolate, pizza or French fries.

**I find it easiest to stay on my fitness track when I'm home doing my usual routine. But when I go on vacation or have a long holiday weekend, I'm not as diligent, and I indulge more. Are those times to rest and just enjoy life or do you suggest staying active during those times as well?**

It depends. Different vacations call for different things. Some vacations are all about rest and indulging, and that's vital to maintaining balance in life. Rest is incredibly important for a healthy body. Sleeping in is one of the greatest joys of vacation. Other vacations are all about doing activities.

Here's the thing: I will always suggest staying active for 30 minutes a day, at least. You will enjoy your indulgences more if you give your body that needed movement and release. You will rest easier if you give your body that exercise. Your mind will be clearer if you do it. Plus, when you come home after your vacation, it won't be so hard to get back on track because you'll still be in that workout rhythm.

When it comes to vacation, working out shouldn't compromise the things you were looking forward to. If you want to sleep in, don't wake up early and workout. Sleep in, and then workout. It should never take away from a fun activity; do the activity and then go for a walk during downtime. Make sure it's naturally interwoven, a part of your vacation not

taking the place of anything.

**You've had your share of injuries. Which workouts do you find more injury friendly for people who've also suffered from sports injuries? Or everyday life injuries, like whiplash?**

Injuries are the best teacher. They force a connection with the body—your body is talking to you. It creates an awareness that can empower you to play with your workouts. You can balance your exercise depending on how your body feels.

Even for injuries, circuit training is incredible. There are many varieties of circuit training that I think there is an option for everyone. I am also a huge proponent of Pilates, yoga and swimming for injuries. A large portion of my Pilates clients are those who suffer from injuries from extreme workouts. Pilates has personally helped me with knee and shoulder injuries. I can't say enough about Pilates; it's such a healing modality.

**You've mentioned "higher thoughts" before. What is a higher thought? And what is something a woman can think when she's not quite ready to exercise in a sports bra but wants to?**

Higher thoughts are one step up from the motivating thoughts you have to get you to a truer, kinder self. Women have this counterproductive ability to take on the world yet beat themselves up while doing it. We don't give ourselves enough credit for how powerful we are.

Here's how it works, the second you start speaking negatively to yourself, train yourself to say, "Choose the higher thought." And ask yourself what it is, and then repeat it over and over again.

I had moments where I felt insecure in a sports bra. (I understand this feeling). But here's the truth. You think people care? They don't. Everyone is too wrapped up in their workout and their lives to care. And if they judge you, it's because they struggle with insecurities, and you just gave them an opportunity to go deeper within themselves. What women want to see in other women is self-love, acceptance and a freedom of spirit. Women can feel that inspiring energy in a room. If you want to workout in a sports bra—do it—because you are likely inspiring another woman to be more confident in her own skin.

**What is a higher thought you told yourself about your body throughout your fitness journey?**

I hated my body for the longest time. I was always bigger than I wanted to be, particularly

in my legs and my butt. I had no self-confidence. No matter how thin I got or how much weight I gained back, the self-hatred stayed. It took years of training my mind, more so than my body, to stop fixating on what I thought were problematic areas on my body and to focus on gratitude and perspective. A higher thought I told myself was: "You are worthy, you are enough."

I don't believe in beating your body up to get results. You and your body are in a relationship. Have you ever seen a relationship thrive under extreme behavior and abuse? No. Relationships thrive with compassion, patience and balance. And, most importantly, consistency. Why can't we apply these same qualities to our relationship with our body?

The knowledge I learned training thousands of women inspired me to customize my workouts. I supplemented circuit training with yoga, Pilates and running, which are my favorite workouts that compliment my body. I didn't use heavy weights for my legs since I wanted leaner muscles there. I used heavier weights for my arms to look more cut. For my butt, I would play with stairs and go sideways and backward, almost dancing on the stairs, to heighten and tighten without bulking up.

### **How are you feeling about your body nowadays?**

I love it. I'm not the skinniest, but I feel fit and strong. I've found consistency because I harnessed a relationship with my body. I struggle from time to time, especially seeing the incredible bodies I train, but I work hard at it. It gets easier. It takes mental strength and training. When I feel struggle I go back to the higher thought of gratitude, realizing that my body is moving with grace and ease.

Taking care of your body is the key to discovering your purpose. When you take care of your health, you are saying to the world, "I care about me. I am worth it." As you make that commitment to you, life unfolds before you in such a beautiful, meaningful way.