

YOUR NEXT MISSION

A 7-Day Healthy Habits Starter Guide
for Men 55+

By Michael Gross

**Your service may be complete.
Your next mission has just begun.**

After years of working, serving, and taking care of others, it is easy to lose the structure that once kept you moving.

As a retired military member and firefighter, I understand how much purpose and routine can shape our lives. This is your invitation to create that structure again, with room to enjoy the life you have earned.

ONE MANAGEABLE ACTION EACH DAY

Work through the guide one day at a time. Write your answers and check off each mission. At the end of the week, choose two actions to keep practicing.

Purpose / Movement / Nutrition / Rest / Connection

Begin with purpose.

DAYS 1 & 2 / Find your reason. Make room for movement.

01 Give yourself a reason

What do you want better health to help you do? Walk comfortably on vacation? Play with your grandchildren? Enjoy retirement with more independence?

Your mission: Finish the sentence below. Place your answer somewhere you will see it tomorrow.

I want to take better care of myself so I can...

☐ I wrote down my reason.

02 Make room for movement

Choose movement you enjoy and can do comfortably: a short walk, easy stationary cycling, or an activity already approved for you.

Your mission: Set aside five minutes for that activity. Keep the effort comfortable; stop if you feel unwell or experience pain.

My activity

My time

☐ I made time to move.

Before you begin: Follow your healthcare team's guidance. If you have an injury, ongoing symptoms, or uncertainty about exercise, ask your clinician what is appropriate for you.

Build a daily rhythm.

DAYS 3 & 4 / Make one meal and one evening more intentional.

03 Plan one balanced meal

Keep your choices familiar and practical.

Your mission: Plan one meal with a protein food, a vegetable or fruit, and a whole grain or another starchy food.

Example: chicken, broccoli, and a baked sweet potato. Adapt your choices to your dietary needs.

My meal

☐ I planned and prepared one intentional meal.

04 Prepare for a calmer evening

Create a little structure around the end of your day.

Your mission: Choose one calming activity for the 15 minutes before your usual bedtime: reading, quiet music, or preparing for tomorrow.

My evening activity

☐ I followed my evening routine.

Keep each action small enough to fit an ordinary day.

Make room for living.

DAYS 5 & 6 / Reach out. Put something good on the calendar.

05 Reconnect with someone

Retirement can change how often we see the people who matter to us.

Your mission: Call a friend, check on a former colleague, or arrange time with someone you enjoy.

Start with: "You crossed my mind today. How have you been?"

Someone I want to contact

☐ I reached out to someone.

06 Put enjoyment on the calendar

What makes you look forward to the day? A visit to an art show? Time outdoors? A hobby? An outing with family?

Your mission: Schedule one enjoyable activity for the coming week.

My activity

Date and time

☐ I scheduled something to look forward to.

Choose what continues.

DAY 7 / Reflect on this week. Make a plan for the next one.

07 Recognize your progress

Take a moment to recognize what you actually did. Choose two actions to repeat next week.

My easiest action was...

My biggest obstacle was...

One thing I am proud of...

MY TWO ACTIONS FOR NEXT WEEK

1. I will _____ after _____.

2. I will _____ after _____.

☐ I made my plan for next week.

TRACK YOUR NEXT WEEK

Check a box each time you practice.

MY ACTION	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Action 1	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Action 2	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Missed a day? Pick up with the next action. Adjust your plan as you learn what works for you.

Follow Fit and Happy 4 Life for more practical encouragement.

We are not finished. We are just getting started. - Michael Gross