

Dr. Uche Odiatu - Fit to Lead – The Importance of Self Care

John O'Keefe: I'm delighted to welcome back my friend, Dr. Uche Odiatu, General Dentist in Toronto and he's well known in the dental conference circuit for his talks about wellness and fitness. And, just to warm us up Uche, how you doing? How have you been since we spoke last?

Dr. Uche Odiatu: Good. Really good. I think this whole time off, between reading and resting and I'm healing joints and refreshing, looking at my list of life goals I want to accomplish. I'm raring to go back, though. I am raring to go back. I can't wait to interact with patients again.

John O'Keefe: Yeah, I have no doubt. But this is the third in our series of short conversations in which you give us a tip. I have to tell you that a dentist colleague of mine said to me when she heard one of them, she asked her husband, who was driving, pullover I want to see this. This Uche guy is really good. So maybe you could - it was pretty neat, eh -tell us, just give us one more tip today, just for how we can just manage stress and just, just take care of ourselves, especially at these really difficult times.

Dr. Uche Odiatu: Okay. Well I have a keynote actually called "fit to lead", and it's how being physically fit helps everything in your life work better. And most people think of fitness as just something in the gym, but a Carl Cotman talked about after workout your memory improves for two hours after by 20%. It improves the frontal orbital cortex, which is the command and control center of your brain. It helps that work better. It gives you more energy. Helps you manage stress. It's incredible. Like, I think JFK said it best, you know when the tide comes in - when you get fit - all ships rise together. So, you get fit, or you get healthy, everything in your body works better. It's really quite remarkable how it's much more beyond the selfie or looking good on your Facebook profile.

John O'Keefe: Yeah, well some of us would have no chance to look at much better on our Facebook profile. But I've been taking your lead, you know, I was on the rowing machine this morning for 20 minutes. Am I on the right path?

Dr. Uche Odiatu: That's perfect. I think most experts are complicated. People end up watching a fitness guru online and they get left with more questions than when they started. I think simplicity is everything and my big passion is easy, doable, effortless, and it can be done daily. That's my thing. Daily disciplines.

John O'Keefe: Yeah. Well, you know, when I was a young lad, I used to go out for these long runs and then I used to go to a gym, but personally having a rowing machine in the basement with a nice little YouTube video watching something - that works for me. How do you do it?

Dr. Uche Odiatu: That's perfect. I've really embraced this whole concept called interval training and the new science of interval training. It's been around for 50 years, but most people think of it as something that elite athletes will use. I believe everyday people, with the new science - this is out of McMaster university, Dr. Martin Gibala PhD - his studies have shown that as little as five to seven minutes a day of interval training, where you alternate the intensity, is as good or better for you than one hour of steady state training. Steady state training is no longer the way to go. It's like a 1990s workout and no longer works. So, interval training is more efficient. It packs it in and very good for busy people who don't have that much time.

John O'Keefe: Back to my little thing. 20 minutes is my time and you know I watch the video because, you know, just a travel video or something like that because the old body and the mind flag after about 10 minutes, so I have to lower the intensity. But then I pick it up again. Is that a way to go?

Dr. Uche Odiatu: You're on the right track, basically. You could even shorten it up more. It could be as little as seven, five to seven minutes, John. Like you'd be surprised, like, and I could make that article available. I'm not sure if your viewers need it because I can make available for you. But it's all about changing the intensity and the set. It's much more like how our ancient primordial primitive physiology liked to work: rest - intense, rest - intense. They said cavemen and cavewomen never did steady state jogging. They basically walked until they had to run, and they walked until they had to run. And that's basically, it improves your ability to manage oxygen, take it in, use it and send it off. Much better than steady state training.

John O'Keefe: Right. Now you've got a gym in your basement. You know we shot a segment from there. I've got my rowing machine. We want people to be simple. Do it short. Is there any advice about just how to get yourself geared up to get started?

Dr. Uche Odiatu: Well, one big advice. I'm all about making it easy. I think people need to take their exercise equipment out of the basement and actually put it in the living room. Until it's a habit, you've got to make that Peloton, you've gotta make that rower, you've got to make that stationary bike - put it right smack in your living space. It's annoying. Your spouse is going to hate you for that. Your kids will bug you about it. But you will use it cause you'll bump into it every day. And it's a great way to develop the habit because it reminds you every day what you need to be on. So, I say bring your exercise equipment right into your main floor living space until you develop the habit.

John O'Keefe: Well you know if I brought it into the living space, I'd have a few cats to contend with as well, so I'm in a safe place. But I promise I have a well beaten path down to the basement. So, the keys are: keep it short, intensity rather than, you

know, it's a sprint rather than a marathon. And there's some basic equipment that doesn't cost an arm and a leg and you can, you can get right?

Dr. Uche Odiatu: Sure. There's a safety factor. If someone can't walk for 30 minutes, they shouldn't attempt interval training until they have the fitness ability to be able to walk at a steady state for 30 minutes. And best to, if you're going to try something new, make sure your doctor or healthcare provider said it's safe for you to exercise. So, intensity is pretty good, but not for everyone if someone's been deconditioned a long time. So, we've gotta be safe, obviously first,

John O'Keefe: Right. So, let's just aim towards the exit door with this little segment now. You will make that article that you're talking about available. You can always put it in as a little response under the Facebook thread for this, and then we'll use that link afterwards as well. But I'm dying to ask you one thing. During our last session, you talked about a microbiome webinar you were going to do. Just, how did it go? Good feedback?

Dr. Uche Odiatu: It was great. I think the microbiome is very much a well-kept secret still. We've always had one, you know, bacteria have been on the planet for three and a half billion years. So, I'm just letting dental professionals know that when you start understanding it - and you've got to realize your patients have one - and how it literally dictates the strength of the immune system. It dictates your metabolism. It dictates how mentally clear you are. And if you don't eat the right things, it's impossible to have a healthy, happy microbiome. And then everything else doesn't work. So, I love sharing this whole microbiome science. It's kind of convoluted - lots of immunology and microbiology - but once you understand it, it makes eating healthy simple. It lowers the inflammatory burden. And because dentists and hygienists, we're in charge of the masticatory apparatus. We're in charge of how we chew and eat. And one of the best ways, the number one way to increase the healthy microbiome, is to eat healthy food. So, we're in charge of that. Like no other health profession is in charge of the eating apparatus.

John O'Keefe: So how about this? Will you come back again the next time and then give us a five-minute overview of the microbiome.

Dr. Uche Odiatu: Sure, my pleasure.

John O'Keefe: Uche, thank you ever so much for taking time to talk to us today and just highlight for us the importance of that short, intense exercise that's easy, done at home. You don't have to go the other end of the city to get to it. Thanks, and let's look forward to the next time.

Dr. Uche Odiatu: My pleasure.