

PHYSICAL IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

MAN YEAR PLAYBOOK
PHYSICAL MODULE



A NEW DIGITAL RESOURCE CRAFTED BY
**FORMING
MEN**

LETTER FROM JON & JEFFERSON

Brothers,

Welcome to the **Physical Health** module of Man Year. You've already done deep work in your spiritual and emotional life and are currently halfway through Man Year. Now, we're shifting focus to your body because **your body matters**.

We live in a world that often swings between two extremes: worshiping the body or neglecting it. One says, *"Your worth is in how you look."* The other whispers, *"This body doesn't matter – just focus on the soul."* Both are lies.

God didn't create us as floating spirits – He formed Adam from the dust and breathed life into him. He designed us to be **strong, resilient, and capable** – to work, protect, endure, and serve. The greatest men of Scripture weren't just wise and faithful; they were strong in body and spirit. Moses climbed mountains in old age. Paul endured brutal beatings and kept going. Jesus Himself, a carpenter by trade, walked miles upon miles, fasted for forty days, and carried the cross on His back. The main thrust of what we want you to learn over the next three months is that your body is deeply interconnected to other aspects of yourself (emotions, your walk with Jesus, etc.), and that is a gift. Also, understanding the theological implications of why God gave us a body and how we can steward it will reap enormous benefits in your life.

So, we thought of no better person to help us with this module than our dear friend Chris Cirullo. Chris is a former Army Ranger who now runs a ministry called Mission Fit Dads. He uses the lens of physical stewardship to teach men about all aspects of themselves. He has brilliantly laid out different levels of plans and difficulty for all men to find a space to enter in and grow over the next 12 weeks.

Remember, physical stewardship is not about vanity. It's about **capacity**. The stronger you are, the more you can give. The healthier you are, the more endurance you have for your wife, your kids, your mission, and your brothers. But let's be real – this will take work.

LETTER FROM JON & JEFFERSON

Some of you are already disciplined in this area, and this module will push you to new heights. Others are stepping into it for the first time, and it may feel like foreign territory. Either way, this is not just about workouts and diets. It's about rewiring your **mindset** around your physical body.

This module will challenge you in **four key areas**:

1. **Movement** - Training your body for strength, endurance, and resilience.
2. **Fuel** - Honoring God by putting the right things in your body.
3. **Rest** - Understanding that recovery is as essential as work.
4. **Discipline** - Cultivating the mental and spiritual toughness to stay the course.

We'll also invite you to **track your progress** because growth is measurable. You'll set keystone habits, choose a challenge that fits your level, and push yourself beyond comfort.

No matter where you're starting, **you can do this**.

You were made to be strong.

You were made to be capable.

You were made to be a man who can bear weight – not just in the gym, but in your home, community, and the Kingdom.

Let's get after it.

- JEFF & JON

CHALLENGE TRAINING OUTLINES:

Key Notes for All Plans Below:

- > Rest days between sessions
- > Follow keystone habits daily
- > Listen to body/adjust as needed
- > Maintain spiritual focus
- > Scale intensity to ability level

CHALLENGE 1

Walk to Run (5K) Challenge

- > Weeks 1-4: Walk 20-30 mins, adding 2-3 min jogging intervals
- > Weeks 5-8: Alternate 5 mins walking/5 mins jogging
- > Weeks 9-12: Mostly jogging, walk breaks as needed
- > Do this 3 times per week
- > One longer session on weekends
- > Week 12: Full 5K run

CHALLENGE 2

Basic Strength Foundation

Start where you are comfortable and progress weekly:

Push-ups:

- > Start with 5 (or your current max)
- > Add 1-2 reps per week
- > **Goal:** 20 proper push-ups by week 12

Squats:

- > Start with 10 (or your current max)
- > Add 3-4 reps per week
- > **Goal:** 50 squats with good form

Plank:

- > Start: 15-20 seconds
- > Add 5 seconds each week
- > **Goal:** 60-second hold

Do all three of these 3 times per week

Off days: Any activity you enjoy (walking, weights, sports, hiking, rest, etc.)

CHALLENGE 3

Flexibility Milestone

- > Start: 5 minutes daily stretching (20-30 seconds of holding per stretch)
- > Add 1-2 minutes each week
- > Focus on hamstrings and lower back
- > Use towel to help deepen stretches but don't force it. Nice and gentle.
- > **Goal:** Hold toe touch 30 seconds with straight legs

CHALLENGE 4

Body Composition Challenge

- > Focus on nutrition fundamentals (included in this guide)
- > 3-4 strength sessions per week of your choice
- > 2-3 cardio sessions per week
- > Weekly measurements/progress photos
- > **Goal:** -2% body fat, maintain/gain muscle
- > Rest days: Light activity like walking

The best method for beginning and ending measurements would be a dexa scan (dexafit.com) or a bodpod. If those are hard to find or cost-prohibitive in your area, a standard body impedance scale that estimates your body fat is fine. Just ensure you're measuring at the same time each day with the same variables accounted for (water intake, did you use the restroom before it, etc.)

CHALLENGE 5

Dead Hang + Pull-ups

Practice both exercises each session; do this 3x/week.

Dead Hangs:

- > Start: 15-30 seconds
- > Add 5-10 seconds weekly
- > Goal: 90 seconds

Pull-Ups:

Progressive options

1. Negative pull-ups (jump up, lower slowly)
2. Band-assisted pull-ups
3. Partial pull-ups
4. Full pull-ups

Warm up, do as many pullups as you can, then drop down to the next progressive option. For instance, do 1 pullup to failure, then get the bands out and do a few more with band-assist. If you can't do a pull-up yet, start with band assist, do as many as you can, then drop to partials, etc.

CHALLENGE 6

Endurance (10K)

- > Weeks 1-4: Build to running 3 miles continuously
- > Weeks 5-8: Increase to 4-5 miles, add speed work
- > Weeks 9-12: Build to full distance at target pace
- > 3 runs per week
- > One longer run on weekends
- > **Goal:** 10K under 50 minutes

CHALLENGE 7**Strength-Endurance Complex****Weekly Progression:****Weeks 1-4:****Building Base Numbers**

- > Start with 3 (or 4 where noted) sets of each exercise, resting as needed
- > Week 1: 3 sets of 10 each (30 total)
- > Week 2: 3 sets of 15 each (45 total)
- > Week 3: 4 sets of 12 each (48 total)
- > Week 4: 4 sets of 15 each (60 total)

Weeks 5-8:**Increasing Volume**

- > Week 5: 5 sets of 15 each (75 total)
- > Week 6: 6 sets of 15 each (90 total)
- > Week 7: 5 sets of 20 each (100 total)
- > Week 8: 4 sets of 25 each (100 total)

Weeks 9-12:**Reducing Rest Times**

- > Week 9: 4 sets of 25 with 2-minute rests
- > Week 10: 4 sets of 25 with 90-second rests
- > Week 11: 4 sets of 25 with 60-second rests
- > Week 12: 4 sets of 25 with 30-second rests

Train this 2-3 times per week depending on fatigue/soreness/continued progression. If you plateau, it might be time to trim back to 1-2x/week for a couple of weeks, then increase again.

Rest days: Light cardio or complete rest

Scale exercises as needed (knee push-ups, assisted sit-ups, etc.)

Final Goal: Complete all 300 reps (100 each) in under 20 minutes

CHALLENGE 8

Elite Performance (Murph)

12-week Goal: Full Murph with 20lb vest under 55 minutes

Prerequisites:

- > 10+ strict pull-ups unbroken
- > 25+ push-ups unbroken
- > 50+ air squats unbroken
- > Mile run under 8:30

2-3 Sessions Per Week**Weeks 1-3:**

Session 1: Half Murph, no vest

- > 800m run
- > 50 pull-ups, 100 push-ups, 150 squats
- > 800m run

Goal: Under 25 minutes

Session 2: Movement Prep

- > Mile run
- > 75 pull-ups, 150 push-ups, 225 squats
- > Break into 5 rounds of 15-30-45
- > Rest as needed between rounds

Weeks 7-9:

Session 1: Full Murph, no vest

- > Break into 5 rounds of 20-40-60

Goal: Under 45 minutes

Session 2: Half Murph with 20lb vest

Goal: Under 35 minutes

Weeks 4-6:

Session 1: 3/4 Murph, no vest

- > Mile run
- > 75 pull-ups, 150 push-ups, 225 squats
- > Mile run

Goal: Under 40 minutes

Session 2: Half Murph with 10lb vest

Goal: Under 30 minutes

Weeks 10-12:

Session 1: Full Murph with 20lb vest

- > Break into 5 rounds of 20-40-60

Goal: Work down to under 55 minutes

Session 2: Movement quality with vest

- > Focus on form and consistent pacing
- > 3-4 rounds of 20-40-60 with perfect form

Notes:

- > Always partition reps (suggest 5-10-15 or 4-8-12)
- > Rest 2-3 days between sessions
- > Scale back other upper body/pushing work during this time
- > Full rest day before any full Murph attempts

NUTRITIONAL STEWARDSHIP PRINCIPLES, OPTIONS, AND GUIDELINES

PRINCIPLES

1. Quality Matters

- > Whole, unprocessed foods provide better nutrition
- > Food is fuel for your body's needs
- > What you eat impacts energy, recovery, and performance

2. Consistency Over Perfection

- > Small, sustainable changes compound over time
- > Weekly averages matter more than individual meals
- > Plan ahead for success

3. Individual Response

- > Every body responds differently to foods
- > Listen to your body's signals
- > Energy and recovery are key indicators

GUIDELINES

1. Daily Targets

- > Protein: 0.75–1.0g per pound bodyweight
- > Water: Half body weight in ounces
- > Vegetables: 2–3 servings minimum
- > Meals: 3 proper meals vs constant snacking

2. Food Selection

Emphasize:

- > Lean proteins
- > Vegetables
- > Fruits (2–3 servings)
- > Complex carbohydrates
- > Healthy fats

Minimize:

- > Refined sugars
- > Processed snacks
- > Fried foods
- > Sugary beverages
- > Alcohol

3. Meal Timing

- > Eat within 1 hour of waking
- > Space meals 3–4 hours apart
- > Avoid eating close to bedtime

Take this slowly and implement it over time. Most “diets” and “exercise programs fail because people take on WAY too much all at once. Instead, take this first month to phase yourself into changes to your nutritional stewardship. That could look like the following:

PROGRESSIVE NUTRITION ROLL-OUT

Week 1: Foundation

- > Calculate protein target (awareness)
- > Set up water intake system (which water bottle, how you’ll keep track)
- > Establish consistent meal timing (write down when your typical meals will be)
- > Remove obvious junk food (you know what these are. If you have to ask, remove)

Week 2: Quality

- > Implement ‘protein at every meal’
- > Add vegetables to lunch/dinner
- > Start meal planning basics – think ahead
- > Address snacking habits – “Why does this happen and when does it most often happen?”

Week 3: Optimization

- > Fine-tune portions to meet
- > Enhance meal prep strategies
- > Improve pre/post workout nutrition
- > Handle stress/emotional eating

Week 4+: Sustainability

- > Create sustainable weekly rhythm
- > Navigate social situations
- > Develop backup meal plans
- > Establish long-term habits

HOW TO EASILY MEASURE FOOD BY HAND

Do you want to measure your food intake but don't want to fuss with a calorie-tracking app? Below is a general outline for how you could aim to do that at each meal. Naturally, this becomes challenging to do with things like casseroles, pasta, and other "mixed food" type meals, but what would happen if you began to intentionally "eyeball measure" 7 or 8 out of every 10 meals?

You would see progress, improved digestion, better energy, and overall health.

PROTEIN (palm-sized portion)

- > 1 palm = 20-30g protein
- > Examples: Meats, fish, poultry, eggs (3-4 whole eggs = 1 palm)



CARBS (cupped hand)

- > 1 cupped hand = 20-30g carbs
- > Examples: Rice, potatoes, oats, fruits, legumes



VEGETABLES (fist)

- > 1 fist = 1 serving vegetables (about 1 cup)
- > Any non-starchy vegetables



FATS (thumb)

- > 1 thumb = 9-15g fat
- > Examples: Oils, nuts, nut butters, avocado, seeds



Daily portions for men based on body type/goals:

> Men aiming for fat loss: 2 palms protein, 2 fists veggies, 2 cupped hands carbs, 1-2 thumbs fat per meal × **3 meals/day**

> Men aiming for muscle gain: 2 palms protein, 2 fists veggies, 2 cupped hands carbs, 2 thumbs fat per meal × **4 meals/day**

This gives ballpark daily total of:

> **Fat loss:** 6 portions protein, 6 portions veggies, 6 portions carbs, 3-6 portions fat

> **Muscle gain:** 8 portions protein, 8 portions veggies, 8 portions carbs, 8 portions fat

SIMPLE MEAL PLAN IDEAS

Breakfast

Protein Sources:

- 3-4 whole eggs
- 1 cup Greek yogurt (plain)
- 1-2 scoops protein powder
- 4-6 oz cottage cheese
- 3-4 turkey sausage links
- 4-5 oz smoked salmon

Complex Carbs:

- 1/2-1 cup oatmeal
- 1 medium sweet potato
- 2 slices Ezekiel bread
- 1/2-1 cup quinoa
- 1 cup steel-cut oats

Fruits:

- 1 banana
- 1 cup berries
- 1 apple
- 1 orange
- 1/2 cup mixed fruit

Quick Combinations:

- Oatmeal + protein powder + banana
- Eggs + ezeziel toast + berries
- Greek yogurt + fruit + nuts
- Protein smoothie + oats
- Cottage cheese + fruit + honey

Lunch & Dinner Options

Protein Sources (2 Palm-Sized = 8-12 oz):

- Chicken breast (8-12 oz)
- Lean beef (8-12 oz)
- Salmon/fish (8-12 oz)
- Turkey breast (8-12 oz)
- Pork tenderloin (8-12 oz)
- Lean ground meats (8-12 oz)
- Tofu/tempeh (12-16 oz)

Vegetables (2 Fist-Sized = 2 cups):

- Broccoli
- Mixed greens
- Bell peppers
- Green beans
- Brussels sprouts
- Asparagus
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Mixed stir-fry vegetables

Complex Carbs (2 Cupped Hands):

- Sweet potato (1-1.5 cups cooked)
- Rice (1-1.5 cups cooked)
- Quinoa (1-1.5 cups cooked)
- Wild rice (1-1.5 cups cooked)
- Butternut squash (1-1.5 cups cooked)
- Black beans (1-1.5 cups cooked)
- Lentils (1-1.5 cups cooked)

Healthy Fats (1-2 Thumb-Sized):

- Avocado (1/4-1/2)
- Olive oil (1-2 tbsp)
- Nuts (1/4 cup)
- Seeds (2 tbsp)
- Coconut oil (1-2 tbsp)
- Butter/ghee (1-2 tbsp)

Websites for recipes if you want to explore cooking:

<https://fitmencook.com/recipes/>

<https://therealfooddietitians.com/category/courses/main-entree/>

<https://www.primalkitchen.com/blogs/recipes>

<https://whole30.com/recipes/>

EASY & BASIC FAMILY MEAL FORMULA:

Sheet Pan Dinners:

- Protein + 2-3 vegetables
- Season everything similarly
- Cook at 400°F for 20-30 minutes

Slow Cooker Meals:

- Protein + vegetables + seasoning
- Set in morning, ready by dinner
- Makes multiple servings

Stir-Fry Template:

- Protein + mixed vegetables
- Simple sauce
- Serve over rice/quinoa

Taco/Bowl Night:

- Ground meat or shredded chicken
- Variety of toppings
- Everyone builds their own
- Easy to modify for preferences

EASY SNACK OPTIONS:

Protein-Based:

- Hard-boiled eggs (2)
- Greek yogurt cup
- Protein shake
- Turkey/beef jerky
- Tuna packet
- String cheese

Fruit/Vegetable:

- Apple slices
- Baby carrots
- Cucumber slices
- Bell pepper strips
- Berry mix
- Orange sections

Healthy Fats:

- Almonds (12-15)
- Mixed nuts (1/4 cup)
- Pumpkin seeds (2 tbsp)
- Avocado (1/4)

Quick Combinations:

- Apple + string cheese
- Carrots + hummus
- Greek yogurt + berries
- Hard-boiled eggs + cucumber
- Tuna + crackers
- Protein shake + banana

CLOSING NOTES:

Your health journey isn't about perfection; it's about progress and sustainability. One of the biggest traps that derails well-intentioned men is the "all or nothing" mindset. You know the pattern: you slip up at lunch, so you write off the whole day. That turns into writing off the week, waiting for Monday to "start fresh." Before you know it, you've spent more time "starting over" than making progress.

Here's a better approach: aim to be someone who never misses twice in a row. Had an unplanned pizza binge at lunch? That's fine - make your next meal align with your portions. Skipped the gym for three days? No problem - get back in there today, not "next week." This isn't about being perfect but being consistent over the long haul. Yes, sometimes you'll miss twice, or even three times in a row. That's not failure - it's just life. The key is to keep coming back to your baseline without the guilt trip.

This combination of drive and grace is where the magic happens. Drive keeps you moving forward, while grace keeps you from burning out. When you find this balance, you're no longer on a diet or a program - you're simply living a sustainable, healthy lifestyle. This is how you become someone who can maintain their health for decades, not just weeks or months. It's about building a relationship with food and fitness marked by freedom rather than restriction, wisdom rather than rules, and consistency rather than perfection.

Here's the hard truth that most guys need to hear: If you weigh 220 but should be 180, what's the point of these aggressive sprints to 190 if you're spending 90% of your life bouncing between 205-220? You're basically living your life overweight, punctuated by brief periods of being less overweight, all while making yourself miserable in the process.

Think about it. You go hard for 12 weeks, drop to 190, and feel like a hero. But because you achieved it through unsustainable methods—methods you secretly knew you couldn't maintain—you're back at 210 within months. Then, you do it again next year, and again the year after that. You're essentially choosing to live most of your life at 220 with occasional visits to 190 rather than finding a sustainable path to 180 and actually living there.

Let's do the math: If you spend 12 weeks getting to 190, but 40 weeks rebounding back to 220, then repeat this cycle for five years, you've spent about 4 years of that time over 200 pounds. All while beating yourself up, feeling like a failure, and probably developing an unhealthy relationship with food and exercise in the process.

What if, instead, you took 18 months to gradually work your way down to 180 through sustainable habits you could actually maintain? Sure, it's not as sexy as "Lose 30 pounds in 12 weeks!" But would you rather:

Spend 5 years yo-yo-ing between 190-220

OR spend 18 months gradually moving to 180, then actually live there for the next 20 years?

This isn't just about the number on the scale. It's about the mental freedom of not constantly being "on" or "off" a diet. It's about building a lifestyle that supports your health without consuming your thoughts. It's about being able to enjoy family meals, vacations, and holidays without feeling like you're destroying your progress.

Remember: The time is going to pass anyway. In five years, you can either be starting your tenth attempt at a crash diet, or you can be that guy who finally figured out how to live at a healthy weight year-round. The choice is yours, but the path to lasting change is clear—it's the sustainable one, not the spectacular one.

Let's get after it!

- *Chris*