



OUR HEALTH AND WELLNESS STORY: TAKING CARE OF YOU (MIL SPOUSE EDITION)

By [Giovanna Reyes-Alexander](#), [Payal Talwar](#), [Faith Bomar](#) & [Lynda Lind](#),

June 24, 2022

<https://warroom.armywarcollege.edu/podcasts/self-care>

EPISODE TAKEAWAYS:

1. Any journey begins at the beginning. Giovanna talks about assessing your starting point via objective and subjective criteria. Without knowing your starting point can you really have a well-defined ending point? It takes at least two points to define a path.
 - Objective – What is your health status? Recent physical? Are you overweight or underweight? How is your blood pressure? Your blood sugar?
 - Subjective – I want to start a CrossFit class. I'd like to climb a flight of stairs and not feel winded. I want to have more energy when I play with my kids.
2. The entire process is marriage of the tangible and the intangible. The mind affects the body and the body affects the mind. You have to find the confidence to carry out any plan you develop. You need to challenge yourself to keep your mind engaged but it needs to be reasonable, attainable goals that you can measure and plot your progress.
3. You will encounter difficulties and roadblocks along the way. Every PCS move is a break down and rebuild of your life in an unfamiliar environment. Temporary lodging, new grocery stores, gyms etc. these are all distractions and barriers to establishing a healthy routine for you and your family. Moving is stressful. You're allowed to be a little blue. Payal says it's important to remember the number of times you've gone through it before, and more importantly the number of times you've gotten through it before.
4. When it comes to those barriers and difficulties – stop seeing them as absolutes. A failure or a setback today doesn't have to impact your tomorrow. It's a new day to succeed and yesterday's problem shouldn't impact today except to motivate you to try harder.
5. You have to see yourself as a fighter and someone who succeeds. Your self-identity, the label you give yourself will influence and drive your actions and your attitude. Believe in yourself and stay positive in your vision.
6. Despite Faith's outstanding answer of "with hot sauce" the best way to eat the elephant is one bite at a time. Break down projects and goals into small doable tasks. Enjoy each

small success and tackle them with renewed energy and before long you'll cross the finish line.

7. A healthy diet looks different for everybody. But Giovanna cautions any diet that is exclusionary in nature. Anything that tells you to completely eliminate a food group is going to be problematic. You will feel deprived when you're not eating the item and guilty when you break down and slip up.
8. Payal encourages everyone to enjoy and embrace food for the nutrition it provides and the family time and fellowship we typically share during mealtimes. Take control of food and portion sizes. Learn to savor the food instead of rushing to consume.
9. When you feel like you've reached a plateau the hard work starts. You have to take a serious look and evaluate if you're still working as hard as when you saw results. If the answer is no, if you've let your intensity slide then it's time to be honest with yourself and step it up again. If you are still working as hard as before, then it's time to change things up and evolve. Your body and your muscle groups need a little bit of confusion to start seeing movement again. This may be the time to seek external help and resources. Trainers, new fitness classes or dietitians are great places to look for change.
10. Healthy at 50 doesn't look the same as healthy at 25. Be realistic about the stage of life you are in and what you're trying to achieve. It goes back to setting reasonable, attainable goals that you can measure. Anything else will leave you frustrated and disappointed.
11. Listen to your body and be prepared to adjust your exercise regimen and your diet. Nobody is saying make excuses, but pain and injuries can often be avoided by understanding when you're pushing too hard. As Giovanna says maybe what you really need today instead of a poorly executed run around the neighborhood is a yoga class, or a serious stretching session.
12. In summary:
 - Set reasonable, attainable goals
 - Develop a plan on how to achieve them
 - Break that plan into smaller subtasks
 - Make good choices about your exercise and diet that support those tasks
 - Don't get discouraged by setbacks, each day is a fresh start and you're a fighter
 - Enjoy the journey with friends and family as you continuously move towards your ultimate success