

On Fitness

~~Fitness as a concept, is something that can change from person to person. And for some, it's the act of sport, to play football, to play volleyball, tennis. For others, running comes to mind when the thought of fitness. And for others, of course body building. And yet despite it all, there still is a universal concept when it comes to fitness. The physical movement of one's own body. Improvement of one's physical health. And the opposite of sedentary life. I bring this up to talk about the communist left and the lack of one might call, fitness.~~

~~It's not that people oppose fitness. For many on the communist left, you ask them about fitness and they would undoubtedly tell you overall, it is a net positive. And yet, even when they know it is a solid good, they forego it. Why is that?~~

[Intro]

Against Fitness

Mao Zedong, when studying the state of Chinese physical education, saw the flaws that had plagued the institutions. Something to note, in his famous essay, "A Study of Physical Education", he lays out the reasons why students generally disliked Fitness. Whether it was out of no self-awareness or out of shame, students would prefer to study all day than do fitness. In the modern day, those fundamental issue arises within the communist. Is it due to the intellectual nature of the communist? Perhaps its simply old habits that is common among these circles. Whatever the case, it does seem to be a problem that permeates throughout the movement. With common arguments, some general to the public and other specific to a communist.

"This is a political organization, not a social club"

Yes, it must be understood is that most of the organizations with a base large enough to try and encourage any Fitness is first and foremost a political organization. They deal with trying to pass policy, enact change via electoralism or raising awareness of the issue. This is understandable. And yet, these groups will promote events such as barbecues, reading clubs, and get togethers. Which have the same justification for the promotion of Fitness. To build bonds among fellow communists. Another among that plethora of events that are promoted, sports days or fitness outing must be offered and actively encouraged. Not only again does it connect comrades, but it improves the lives of the communist within the organization.

"I don't know the first thing about Fitness"

This I would say is ultimately a self-defeating prophecy. To claim to know nothing about Fitness is absurd, given that due to the nature of how schools around the world work, there is at least some educational classes on physical education. Not to mention references in media about Fitness, whether portrayed negatively or positively. Alright, strawman of this position; its possible they already know about the basics, and are simply referring to more "advanced" Fitness, such as a weight training. Yes, there is information out there, but its overwhelming, and I don't know where to start. Well, its simple, you start by mimicking those around you. Yes it may seem uncomfortable to stare at someone else doing it, but seeing how others do it and then replicating it helps you understand how it would look. You can also ask those around you for advice. Most times, people are happy to lend a hand and demonstrate the proper technique for that move. And if you, there are always online sources that do the same thing but at a 2D level, making it more difficult but not impossible.

“It’s too much time”

This is something that is reasonable. Fitness does in fact take time. In terms of years, months, and also day by day. And so this comes to conflict with other commitments, such as work, family issues, etc. So many people can’t seem to find time to do fitness. Or rather, they believe they don’t have time to be able to make fitness. When that is not always the case. It’s a matter of finding the most optimal time. The morning, especially early mornings (your 5’s and 6s), can serve as a good time to be able to fit in Fitness. This is because it’s usually a time where most people don’t have commitments. At most you will be asleep or laying down, before you have to actually wake up. Why not only use your time optimally, but wake yourself up with Fitness. One that doesn’t even necessarily need to be high intensity. Wake up at those hours and go for a walk, either on a treadmill or outside. Doing basic cardio, such as jumping jacks, pushups, sit ups can go a long way for the building up for endurance. Going to the closest gym would be the best option, as it has all the tools at your disposal, such as weight machines, weights, cardio machines and etc.

“Fitness is reactionary. It’s X/Y/Z”

For the most part, arguments like these are strawmen. Taking some random’s view on fitness and try and paint all communists are having these sentiments. Fitness at the end of the day, is a very neutral act. This can be seen by the different ways people interpret the act of fitness. The best example would be football clubs. With football clubs, they can be heavily associated with chauvinist, nationalist tendencies. Makes sense, given the international nature of football, making nations compete to see who’s the best. However, there are clearly left-wing clubs who have a history of fighting back. If football belonged to any group, it would be clearly be all dominated by one group but that isn’t the case. Yes, certain aspects of it can be more dominant to either a reactionary or communist bend, at the end of the day, it doesn’t affect your politics as your politics affects it. And those who genuinely make any argument to the same extent, are either instigators trying to show how, or people who don’t understand a word of what they are talking about. Fitness is not reactionary.

For Fitness

The truth is, there isn’t any downside to fitness. Fitness is only a net benefit to yourself and the world around you. For those who are obese, it lightens the body, allows more flexibility and movement, and makes everyday functions easier. For those who are scrawny, it allows them to carry more, to run more, to overall do more. And for those in between, its an overall quality of life improvement. The benefits cannot be understated and the drawbacks overstated.

The body already itself is a tool that you can wield for your cause. It can be used to hold up picket signs during strikes. Or as a shield when demonstrating out in the streets. And on occasion, for offense, against those who might be deemed as hostile to your comrades. But the body, like any other tool or weapon, must be kept sharp. A steady stream of filing is needed to keep the edge. Fitness is that for man. It keeps the arms strong, the legs quick and mind clear. The body becomes sharp, an axe ready to cut down any tree.

Another thing we have to deal with is the mind. The world constantly bombards us with worries that build up, slow yet steady. It corrodes us, slowly making everyone go mad. Stress can cause damage to the body, and damage to the mind. Fitness can help that. Much like any other activity, Fitness is an outlet to release any build up within ourselves. There are some that are made for this, such as Yoga. But things like cardio and weight training also help with this. This is due to the fact that when you do Fitness, you begin to focus on what it is that you are doing. When you are

doing bench presses, naturally you have to deal with the tension that is building between you and the weight. And once you are finished, the brain rewards you with dopamine, giving you a feeling of satisfaction. It gives you the benefits of cigarettes and sugar, while improving the body.

Fitness can also build bonds and comradery. It can be done via sport, with past examples such as communist football clubs, sports leagues and recreational centers. Sport is especially a powerful tool compared to most other fitness. Sport more than any, will situate you in a team. One in which you have to learn how to operate with others, coordinate, and playing within a role. Something that can be easily translated to a real practical sense. Not only that, Fitness also allows you build comradery via success. When you are able to succeed your personal record, or lose weight, it is more often than not noticed by the people around you, whether you acknowledge it or not. A sudden wave of congratulations fills the air. It's especially more noticeable when you have a dedicated group of people you work out with. Then the wave becomes a tsunami. The truth is, contrary to the cries of human nature, people like to see others succeed. They relish in the fact of pure happiness; Of accomplishment.

How to Fitness

How do you fitness? Many give you different answers. Weight Training, cardio, calisthenics. The interesting part is none of these suggestions are wrong per se. Each one of these fitness serves a purpose in reinvigorating the body and making it a machine. It all depends what you want your body to become.

The first thing that should be taken into account is diet. How much you consume and what kind of food you eat will determine how. For those looking into weight loss, of course cutting your intake is a start. Don't starve yourself obviously, as that will make you lose less weight, since your body doesn't naturally adjust to less intake. Instead, change what you eat. Of course, increase the intake of vegetables and fruits, rich in fiber and vitamins. But also, look at the types of proteins you are eating. You want to choose meats that are leaner, such as Chicken Breasts, fish like Salmon, and Tuna, Shrimp, Ground Turkey. For carbohydrates, things like white rice, quinoa, sweet potatoes and red potatoes. Foods with polyunsaturated fats, like avocado, cashews, and almonds. The key to a good diet is a savory diet. The issue with most people who diet is they tend to see it as a punishment, rather than a different type of cuisine. You can still eat savory meals, by learning what ingredients to put in that are healthy. For those who are scrawny, the same diet will apply, but with the addition of other things (some grains, dairy etc.). Though of course, the difference is you want to bulk, to be able to build up. So, eating at a healthy yet large rate will be something you will have to get used to.

Then it depends on what you want to do in terms of Fitness. For weight loss, you want to focus on two areas. Burning fat and gaining muscle. You will begin to burn fat naturally once you begin to eat healthy. But if you want to burn additional, you can do some cardio. Not too intense, as that can affect how your body burns calories outside the body, but just enough for you to begin to build endurance and burn off some body fat. You also want to do some weight training. This will help in fighting back against any body fat, by not allowing it space on the body. For those who want to build up muscle, you will be doing less cardio since it can burn your gains and now allow you to do as many reps. Still have some cardio to build up endurance. But what you want is known as hypertrophy. This is when the body begins to repair the muscle within the body. And it possible to increase the muscle via this method. One commonly used by body builders is known as complete muscle failure. This is working your muscle to the brink of absolute failure, where you can no longer

physically use them. This will give you the max amount of gains, though will be tough to achieve. For endurance, cardio will be the best thing you can do.

For sports in a non-competitive environment, can be difficult to understand. This is due to the fact that most people who play them having a lot of knowledge about how the game works. Or rather more knowledge than someone who has never played it. So, they tend to play with other who know as well. But the thing about these sports is that at the end of the day, they are games. Things which are not as serious as one may think. If there is any game, and you can tell that there is no to low stakes in the whole thing, ask if you can join. More often than not, you will be welcomed into any event. If you feel too pressured to join a random game, then go to recreational centers, where it's encouraged to join into physical activities.

Red Fitness

You can say there is a historical case to be made of Red Fitness. The early 20s and 30s saw the rise of worker's sports movements, as an alternative to similar ones from the capitalists and the reactionaries. Communist Football Clubs, Cycling Associations, Field and Track. The list goes on. This was a smaller part of what could be described as a socialist attempt at an alternative life to that of the capitalist. And the shining beacon on the hill for such alternative was the International Worker's Olympiad and the Spartakiad. The antithesis of the Olympics. Where the Olympics wanted only professionals, the Olympiad favored the common man. Where the Olympics gave out medals, the Olympiad gave out diplomas. Where the Olympics boasted country, waving the national flag, Olympiad boasted brotherhood, waving the red flag. Something that is simply undeniable would be the emphasis on the common laborer. Which is an aspect that seems to be emphasized in all promotions of Fitness within communist countries. The USSR had what was known as the "Ready for Labor and Defense of the USSR", a program to get laborers ready for any possible outcome. Whether it was a war with the fascist dogs or capital. This in a way, tied into the Soviet's idea of the "New Soviet Man". Someone who was enthusiastic in the ideas of the October Revolution, but who was muscular and healthy as well. Essentially the idea of the ideal proletariat.

When the Ancient Greeks practiced Fitness, they made a clear distinction between the laborer's strength and the strength of the aristocrat. Whereas the strength of the laborer is derived from the work he does, the aristocrat has free time to be able to obtain that strength at their own rate, build themselves in the form of the statue. The perfect ideal. Why did the Greeks reject the strength of the laborer? Simple. They saw it as beneath them. Something that was dirty and could make the body deformed. No better example than Sparta, warrior's paradise. A country built on cultivating strong men for battle by forcing Fitness on boys to the point of death. They lived, breathed and died Fitness, to create the perfect warrior society. And they were able to do this by having the work of basic civilization be done by slaves. But something that could not be denied by the aristocrats of the time was the actual strength of the laborer. This disconnection is the key difference between Red Fitness and other types of fitness. The communist must emphasize the practicality of fitness. That should be the most important aspect. Being able to freely move. Being able to carry heavy. To sweat. The reason any communist aligned movements won, even those unrevolutionary, was due to the strength of the worker. The ability to hold a strike against scabs. To stand off against the police. To hold the line. Is the modern worker similar to the workers of the old. Hardly. But that strength, it must be harnessed to make any worker's movement of today a reality.

Spartacus, a figure that is revered by the communist left. The Spartakiad was a reference to the slave and the German group of Communists created the "Spartacus League". It makes sense why Spartacus would be seen someone to be inspired by. A slave who was able to stand up against his masters. Being strong enough to break his chains, and being smart enough to break the chains of others. This reveals why Spartacus was a figure seen as worthy to be looked up to. To be able to successfully free himself from his chains, and fight to the bitter end, he had to have the strength to do so. And the only way he could do so was through Fitness. His ability to fight, his ability to run, his ability to get back up. And the most important ability, to inspire. What good does it to understand how the world works, if you cannot change it. And if others cannot see change, they remained blind or worse, nihilistic. A man, too scared to cross the river, for fear of drowning. Until he sees another man swim through. To be able to enact change, you must have the capability capacity to do so.

Fitness, much like playing an instrument, is something that is not easy to dive into. Yes, there are plenty of resources and people willing to help. Yet it's time consuming, and real work has to be put in to be able to fully grasp it. If you accidentally create a bad habit, it is difficult to unlearn, and could have drastic consequences for your performance down the line. But when you finally master it, when your muscles have the memory to go through with the motion, then it's as if you breathe air. Everything becomes clear. You are by no means finished learning. But are learned, and your mind and body is fundamentally changed because of it.

Fitness should be something that communists should embrace. Both on an individual level and at a movement level. If you are as serious about what you believe, and are sure that it can be accomplished, then you must do everything at your disposal to make it happen. A mind is a powerful tool, one that can be used to solved the laws of the universe. An unbroken mind, to some, is a dangerous tool, who can show those in the cave the world outside. But, a mind without a body is just a book. A way of storing information and relaying information. And a book cannot change the world. Only the men who read said book can.