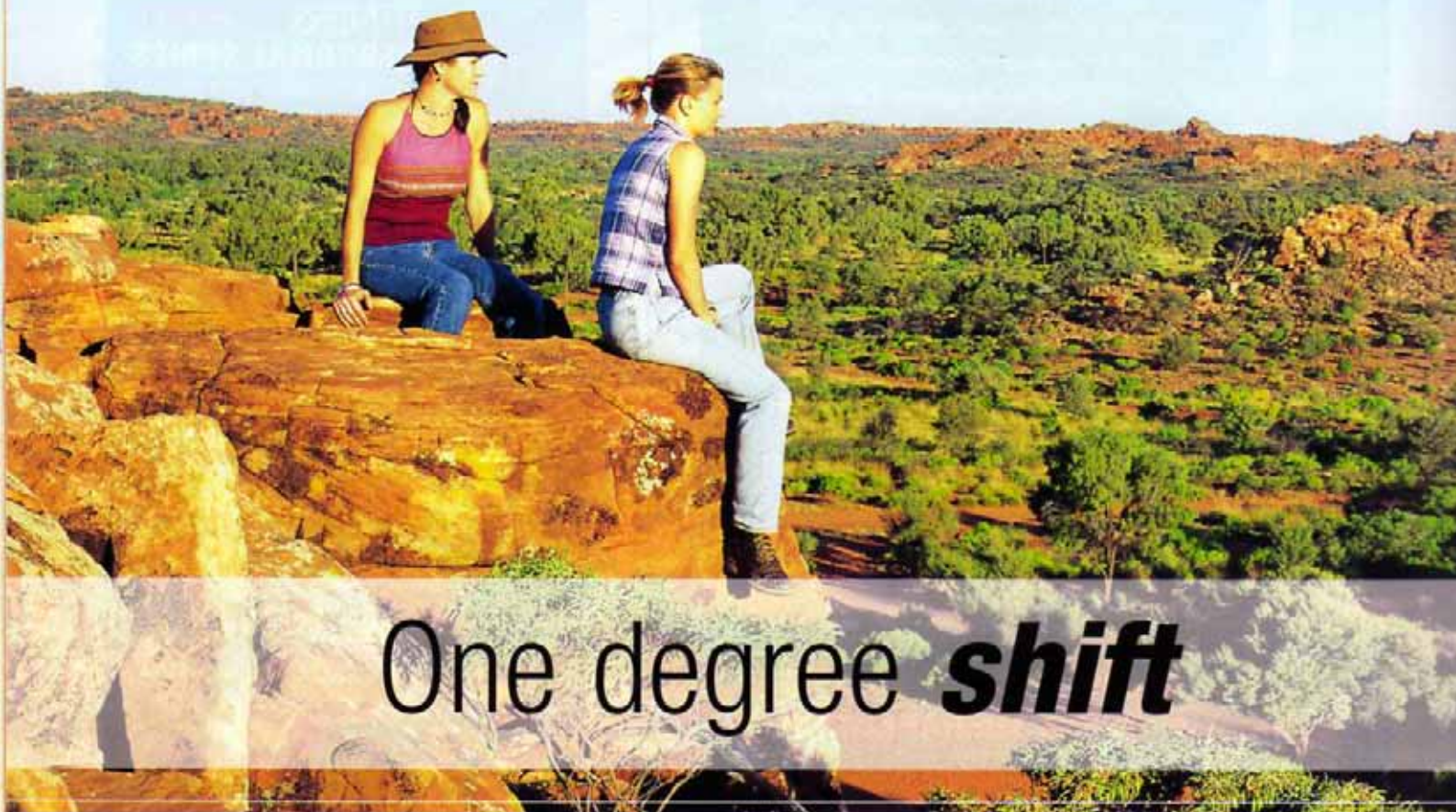


Take some time to sit down and think about how you lead your life, writes **NALISHA PATEL.**



One degree *shift*

Where do your days go? Do you look at the calendar and realise with shock that half the year is gone already? Do you draw a blank when you think of a particular month? Have all the months blurred into a mass of routine?

Do you end up doing much of the same thing every day? Get up, go to work, come home, eat dinner, watch TV, then go to bed. Next day, get up, go to work

It is very easy to get into a routine or a rut. We don't take the time to think about what we would like to do with our lives or



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our day for that matter.

Imagine a plane on course for Auckland airport. If the plane was to veer off by just one degree, over time the plane will be completely off course for Auckland. The plane will end up somewhere completely different. We can apply this to our own lives.

By beginning to change just one thing everyday, we can change the direction of our lives. Just one degree of change in your day or life can lead to a completely new destination of experience and opportunity.

We can apply this principle to our health and fitness. If you find it hard to start exercising, try changing the activity you have do. We tend to be inspired to begin something if we enjoy it. If you find squats boring or hard, try doing travelling lunges instead. Or better yet, grab some skates or blades and get moving with friends!

Instead of jumping on the treadmill every morning, grab a hat and sun-block and head to the nearest beach for a walk or run. If time is of the essence, walk around your neighbourhood with a workout buddy for a change of scenery.

If it's raining outside, avoid excuses and head to your nearest mall. Power-walk around the mall as you speedily window shop! Don't feel embarrassed. Remember you are doing it for yourself. You need to acknowledge the benefits. Remember – what anybody else thinks of me is none of my business!

Try fitting in stretches or calve raises while you are watching TV. If you have several favourite one hour series you watch every week, tape them and watch them when you can fit in some exercise. Do two things at once if time is an excuse you use to put off exercise.

It is interesting how we can spend three to four hours in the evening after work watching TV, yet think we don't have time for exercise!

Once a week try to experience something new. Go to the library and go to a section you've never been to before. Try reading up on self-help or motivational books. Learn a new hobby. Go to a plant store and learn about gardening. Each weekend try to come up with creative ways to add relaxation and adventure into your life.

By making small changes to our lives we can change the direction our life is taking. Everything we do in life, including work, fun activities

Shift one degree with:

- Meditate first thing in the morning before you get out of bed. Lie on your back and arms out to your side. Concentrate on your breath for 10 to 15 minutes.
- Incorporate exercise into your day. Do calve raises while on the phone. Do stretches while watching TV.
- Listen to self-help or motivational tapes while driving or eating.
- Sing out loud in the car to relieve stress.
- Massage your body with a great smelling gel every morning in the shower as a treat.
- Get into bed early and read inspiring books before going to sleep.
- Have a jar full of ideas to do every weekend. Take turns with family members to draw out an idea to do.
- Plan your day the night before. Include inspiring activities and time for yourself and your health. Try to incorporate a new activity everyday. It could be as simple as using candles when eating or eating in silence without the TV on.

and family can have an impact on our health and well-being. Make small changes now and increase doing what brings you wellbeing and joy. You will reap the benefits in terms of the quality of your life, now and in the future. By being able to devote more time to looking after yourself, you will be able to give more to others.

Don't feel guilty for taking time out for yourself.

▲ Nalisha Patel is an exercise physiologist with a BSc in sport and exercise science and psychology. She runs the women's exclusive personal training and consulting business HealthMastery.



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