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—John Robbins, author, *The Food Revolution*,
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FIT QUICKIES

5-Minute Targeted
Body-Shaping Workouts

Lani Muelrath



“Lani Muelrath’s wonderful book is filled with heart and joy. Presenting ‘food, fitness, and frame of mind’ as the three pillars of health, she shows you how to be full without being fat, while having an environmentally kind and compassionate kitchen. This is one exercise book that understands that you don’t have to exercise like a maniac once you get the food right. Highly recommended.”

—John Robbins, author, *The Food Revolution, Diet for a New America*,
and many other best-sellers

“Lani Muelrath’s *Fit Quickies* has the diet right. With simple, effective exercises, the powerful message to be less sedentary, and steps for positive change, Lani takes you forward on the path to a better body—and a healthier life.”

—John McDougall, MD, author; founder, the McDougall Program

“*Fit Quickies* is everything you ever wanted in a fitness and health program all in one place! You’ll find practical exercise suggestions as well as great, easy tips for changing your diet. Lani Muelrath shows you how to power up your menu in exactly the right way. In our studies at the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, we find that these lifestyle changes help our participants lose weight, reverse diabetes, boost heart health, and really change their lives. With Lani’s book, you, too, can easily get on the path to great health.”

—Neal Barnard, MD, president, Physicians Committee for
Responsible Medicine

“With honesty, expertise, and inspiration, Lani Muelrath offers the perfect prescription for a healthier, happier you. *Fit Quickies* is comprehensive, easy, and sure to change your life.”

—Rory Freedman, coauthor, #1 *New York Times* best-seller *Skinny Bitch*

“Lani Muelrath’s talent and expertise have come together in the freshest health and fitness book available today. She covers brilliantly the pillars of lifestyle medicine that mean so much to more than 50,000 graduates of our Complete Health Improvement Program (CHIP): targeted fitness, sensible eating, and a winning attitude. Empowered and consistently practiced, these same lifestyle principles have helped our graduates shed excess weight, disarm diabetes, lower high blood pressure and cholesterol, and facilitate heart disease reversal. Looking for living life at its best—with resilience, vitality, and joy? Then dig in, embrace, and flourish! You are on your way to radiant health with Lani’s easy-to-read and rock-solid book!”

—Hans Diehl, DrHSc, MPH, founder, CHIP and Lifestyle Medicine Institute

“As a dietitian, a runner, and someone who has followed a vegan diet for nearly two decades, I’m thrilled to finally see a one-stop resource that empowers people to meet their highest health potential through diet and exercise. While never losing sight of everyone’s capability to achieve a healthy lifestyle, Lani captivates the reader with her own personal and insightful story toward this goal. She brings us along for the ride and prepares us to take the wheel for the long haul.”

—Susan Levin, MS, RD, Director of Nutrition Education, Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine

“Lani Muelrath is a whirlwind of enthusiasm and encouragement, and in *Fit Quickies* she offers you a special invitation to look and feel better, and a sure path to the life you deserve.”

—Douglas J. Lisle, PhD, psychologist and coauthor, *The Pleasure Trap*

“I believe that a properly-put-together plant-based, whole-food nutrition plan is the greatest performance advantage an athlete can have. With this book, Lani Muelrath will get you on track. Get ready to reap the many benefits!”

—Brendan Brazier, former pro Ironman triathlete, best-selling author of *Thrive*, and formulator of Vega

“Fitness is a critical component to a healthy lifestyle. In *Fit Quickies*, Lani Muelrath delivers skillful, superb exercise instruction with a fun and effective approach to reshaping your body. She compellingly offers a toolbox to help you succeed at fulfilling your goals for optimal health, fitness, and wellness.”

—Julieanna Hever, MS, RD, CPT, host, *What Would Julieanna Do?*; author, *The Complete Idiot’s Guide to Plant-Based Nutrition*

“As an exercise physiologist I am adamant about posture and identifying mobility and stability limitations before initiating exercise training. Lani builds a brilliant and attractive model from the ground up, addressing importance of correct body position before and throughout each exercise. Beautifully detailed, comprehensive, an excellent and friendly recipe for your journey to improved health and fitness, *Fit Quickies* inspires you to get serious about changing your body—and gives you the tools to do it.”

—Steve Henderson, PhD, Department of Biology and Kinesiology, California State University, Chico; owner, SportFit Performance Training

“Losing weight—and more importantly, true wellness—cannot be achieved and sustained by virtue of fad diets. It requires a comprehensive approach that contemplates the optimum health and harmony of mind, body, and spirit. Lani Muelrath’s *Fit Quickies* beautifully embraces this perspective, deftly providing the reader with expert advice to change not just your waistline, but your life—the plant-based way.”

—Rich Roll, plant-based ultra-athlete and best-selling author of *Finding Ultra: Rejecting Middle Age, Becoming One of the World’s Fittest Men, and Discovering Myself*

INTRODUCTION

What if I were to hand you several simple, focused, quick exercises specifically designed to target your body's "challenged" spots?

What if I told you you can do these exercises in the privacy of your own home or take them with you on the road anywhere, anytime, with no pricey special equipment or bulky fitness machines necessary?

What if I told you you can say good-bye to obsessive, unhealthy dieting and habits that keep sabotaging your success and finally have the health, shape, energy, and physical confidence you've always dreamed of?

And what if I told you all you had to do to get there was follow a simple, proven plan, without white-knuckle hunger or grueling, disheartening, excessively time-consuming workouts?

And what if I told you I'm inviting you to fall in love with carbs all over again? I'm not going to keep you apart. You were born to be together.

Now do I have your attention?

If you think eating, weight loss, and healthy fitness shouldn't be a constant, confusing struggle, you're right. They shouldn't be, and they aren't, even if it seems you—like me—have spent years trying to prove otherwise. Be confident that radiant health can be yours, no matter what your age or how many times you may have "failed" in the past. You have every reason to feel hope. Perhaps by the time you've read about my journey, you'll see why. And maybe you'll even see a little of yourself in my story.

I know you may feel frustrated. You might even have spent hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars trying to find a "magic bullet" to make your fitness and weight-loss dreams come true. I understand how you feel.

Or maybe you're simply stuck, frustrated with your health and body-shaping plan, floundering around short of your ever-elusive weight-loss goals.

I can help. In the following pages, I help you understand why you haven't succeeded in your previous weight-loss efforts. And more importantly, I show you how to nudge yourself healthfully and happily into that winner's circle. All it may take is a tweak or two to what

you're already doing. Along the way, I'm going to share my own diet, exercise, and weight-loss journey.

I've traveled a wearisome, winding road to get to where I am today, where weight management is easy, exercise is fun, and eating is a joy. There's nothing like being fit, trim, energetic, healthy, and well fed. There's nothing like having strength and vitality to make it possible to live large—and I don't mean in size.

My Story

I have a long and colorful diet and exercise history—30 years of constantly battling my weight, being at war with food and with my body, and not having the lasting success or real results I craved, no matter what I did. My weight eventually climbed to a high of almost 200 pounds. Unfortunately, I'm one of those people with a genetic code preset to gain weight easily. The good news, I found, is that with diet and exercise, you can alter the expression of those genes.

But for a long time I couldn't seem to realize the dream I was determined to find: lasting weight loss, resilient energy, great shape, *and* a fully satisfying amount of food on my plate. I couldn't shake the deep conviction that this should be my birthright and that I shouldn't have to be a slave to a diet that kept me hungry or to devote ever-expanding chunks of time to exercise.

And one never came along with the other. If I dieted to lose weight, I didn't have the energy to exercise, and it all fell apart in short order because hunger overcame my dietary resolve. I could exercise, exercise, exercise, running miles every day, yet as I learned—over and over again, despite all my attempts to the contrary—you can't out-train a bad diet.

For decades, I craved a simple solution, but lasting success was always lost in empty diet and exercise promises. Sound familiar?

My Defining Moment

My turning point came more than 17 years ago, when I became exhausted and disheartened from the constant battle. To be honest, I felt like I was at war with my body. I was working full-time during the day, teaching fitness at night, and squeezing in my own workouts while meticulously trying to manage my diet, with intermittent and hard-won results. It had to be my genes or my thyroid—or both—I decided. That must be it!

I even toyed with the idea of resigning myself to being a “fit at any size” person. This wasn’t my first choice, but somehow it seemed to be choosing me. Maybe you’ve even thought the same thing.

Finally, the whole thing reached a tipping point. I walked in the door after a long day at work, zonked from yet another 1½-hour workout at the gym. My gym bag was digging into one shoulder while my case of papers from work carved into the other. I was tired and hungry, and I just wanted to eat, lie down, and sleep.

Here I was, working out hard, but as carefully as I was managing my diet, I was getting diminishing returns. I was essentially eating less, exercising more, and slowly gaining weight anyway. Talk about not fair! What’s more, none of it was giving me what I really wanted, which was the pleasure of a fit body with the freedom to *eat*.

At this point, I decided there must be a way to be slim and energetic, enjoy what I ate, exercise a little, and get on with it. I never stopped believing in this possibility. (Perhaps you haven’t either. Good.) I had been chronically playing around with diet and exercise and pretty much ending up where I started. I stopped and asked myself, *What am I missing here?*

My 50-Pound Weight Loss

Finally, I achieved success—and on my own terms. My hunger was satisfied, and I developed an approach to exercise that required just reasonable “workout” time. I eventually lost 50 pounds and have kept that weight off for more than a dozen years—at a time in life when everyone else seems to be packing on the fat and racking up the numbers on the scale. And it keeps getting easier for me.

What made the difference? Why success after so many years? What had changed?

The Three Pillars of Successful Body Transformation

I discovered that healthy weight and fitness success has three essential pillars:

- **Exercise:** How you move (or don’t move) your body
- **Diet:** What you eat
- **Mind-set:** Your mastery of your psychology

When you get all three in alignment, you're unstoppable. But to get what you want, you have to go three for three, or your success will be limited, lopsided, and easily abandoned.

In this book, we take a closer look at the important fundamentals of each pillar. I share specific details on exactly what to do for healthy fitness in each arena—exercise, diet, and mind-set.

And that's exactly what changed, for me, after so many years. Was it my diet? Yes. Was it my exercise? With the right food in place? Yes. Was it thinking differently? First and foremost, yes.

Perhaps, like me, you've had it with exercise programs with inflated and exaggerated claims. The simple truth is, you have to move your body, challenge it in a variety of ways, and keep doing it. Not only that, but you need to *not sit too much*. The two are independent yet related. Each is so important that, whether you're looking for health and vitality, wanting to take a few inches off your waistline, or seeking to add a few extra years to your life, you need to address both. In the following chapters, I show you exactly what that means and give you simple strategies to make it easy. I share clear guidelines for activity that deliver the results I demand. I teach you 14 Fit Quickies in this book. These 5-minute workout gems make a brilliant addition to your body-shaping and energizing exercise arsenal. You can still do the workouts you enjoy; Fit Quickies add variety, focus, and fun to your usual routine and keep your body guessing—the hallmarks of a solid body-shaping program.

Fit Quickies are perfect for revolutionizing your workouts. These research-driven, physical therapist- and exercise physiologist-approved targeted exercises promise to change the shape of your muscles and restore your strength in a refreshing and innovative format.

Perhaps you, too, are suspicious of the dietary plans that encourage you to eat nutritionally challenged “food,” keeping you locked in weight-loss limbo and in total frustration when it comes to getting healthy. The compelling evidence is in: the optimal and easiest pathway to achieving exceptional health and your ideal weight is a whole-food, plant-based diet. This way of eating respects your body's need to be full and your desire to not be fat. In the following chapters, you learn exactly how I eat to easily stay trim, year after year, maintaining my 50-pound weight loss. I show you how you, too, can use these principles along with a simple, time-tested, doctor- and dietitian-approved food plan that won't leave you hungry. If your diet attempts have been focused on portion control or severely restricting carbs, you're doomed and you know it. Help is on the way!



To see a photo history of my weight loss, go to lanimuelrath.com.

When you get the food right, the actions of losing weight, shaping your body, and getting fit and healthy are all so much easier. You carve your figure with your fork. And did you know that the leading cause of death in the United States is nutritionally controllable diseases like heart disease, obesity, certain cancers, and stroke—all diseases we can eat ourselves toward or away from? Undeniable research data show a whole-food, plant-based, low-fat diet is unprecedented in helping you live a healthy, energetic, longer life. At the same time, you reduce environmental impact and create a more compassionate kitchen. How sweet is that?

Plants provide all the proteins, calcium, iron, and other vitamins and minerals your body needs, without the drawbacks of animal products that can weaken your bones, promote cardiovascular or other diseases, or create chronic inflammation. You easily get the complex carbohydrates you need for sustained energy, plus healthy fats that don't clog your circulation, from plant-based sources. What's more, antioxidants and phytonutrients are yours in abundance. My goal is to keep it simple, stick to the basics, and not distract you with supplements, special foods, or concoctions and isolated nutrients.

Finally—and of ultimate importance—when I lost the weight, in addition to the exercise I practiced and the food I put on my plate, I discovered I had to pay attention to what I was thinking and feeling. When making changes, you need to have compassion for yourself and fully support your own endeavors. Without these inner shifts in thinking, the other two pillars of transformation—exercise and diet—are temporary and, at best, superficial. You have to keep in mind what you're looking for. Yes, a slim, energetic, healthy body is one goal, but physical confidence, productivity, fulfillment, and happiness should be, too.

Your fitness, health, and energy are a part of the bigger picture of your life. Your body is the means through which you experience your existence, fulfilling your passion or purpose, contribution, livelihood, avocations, and just plain joy of living. Don't discount the value of this. Don't excuse it away. It's huge and vital to your success.

Acknowledgments

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Deep appreciation to John McDougall, MD, for his pivotal role in my personal success in health and life work. His words of advice and encouragement, beginning with “Write about what you know,” never failed to inspire. Thank you to Jean Antonello, who absolutely changed my life when it comes to food, eating, and my body.

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Thank you to my parents, Chet and Dottie Younghans, who played a crucial part in this book’s production by instilling in me, from a very young age, the love of healthy food and an active lifestyle via hiking, camping, and family adventures in the wild. Thanks to my sisters, Pam Younghans and Kristie Foss, who provide an ever-present foundation of support as only sisters can. All for one and one for all.

And most of all, to my husband and the love of my life, Greg. The process of writing a book is not without its extraordinary opportunities and steep learning curves. You’ve been there with unrivaled guidance, love, and support every step of the way. Thank you.

Special Thanks to the Technical Reviewers

Fit Quickies was reviewed by two experts who double-checked the accuracy of what you'll learn here. Special thanks are extended to Steve Henderson and Susan Levin.

Dr. Henderson teaches human physiology, nutrition for sport and fitness, exercise testing, and prescription and principles of strength and conditioning at California State University, Chico. He also owns SportFit Sport Performance Training, where he works with patient rehab. He is also a national speaker on human movement assessment and kinetic chain dysfunction.

Susan Levin, MS, RD, is the director of nutrition education at the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, a nonprofit organization that advocates for the prevention of disease through a plant-based diet. She is a licensed registered dietitian in the State of New York and in the District of Columbia. She credits her health, love of running, and boundless energy to her 15+ years of practicing what she preaches.

Available at all booksellers

Check out lanimuelrath.com

Transform your body— 5 minutes at a time!

Few people love absolutely everything about their body. Often there's a trouble spot or two—that muffin top that just won't go away, thighs you wish were just a little firmer, or a rear end you'd like to be a little higher off the ground. We all have them.

In *Fit Quickies*, health and fitness expert Lani Muelrath shares her collection of quick, easy-to-follow body-shaping exercises that zero in on those problem areas and give them a solid challenge. With these exercises, you'll lift and shape your body and soon see a flatter belly, shapelier thighs, firmer arms, a tighter tush, a whittled waist, a strong core, and so much more. Each illustrated step-by-step exercise helps you get motivated, stay focused, and avoid common errors.

Lani has helped thousands of people transform their bodies—and their lives—with her three pillars of healthy weight and fitness: a simple exercise plan, a whole-food plant-based diet, and mind-set mastery. In this book, she shares specific strategies on exactly what to do for success in each area.

The body you've always dreamed of *can* be yours. *Fit Quickies* gives you the tools to make it happen.

Lani Muelrath is a celebrity coach for PCRM's 21-Day Vegan Kickstart and VegRun programs, health and fitness expert for *Vegan Mainstream*, and fitness adviser for the Dr. John McDougall Health and Medical Center Discussion Boards. She has a Master's in physical education, is an associate professor at Butte College, and holds multiple fitness and nutrition certifications. Visit lanimuelrath.com.



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"Looking for living life at its best—with resilience, vitality, and joy? Then dig in, embrace, and flourish! You are on your way to radiant health with Lani's easy-to-read and rock-solid book!"

—Hans Diehl, DrHSc, MPH, founder, CHIP and Lifestyle Medicine Institute

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Award winning **LANI MUEL RATH, M.A., CGFI, CPBN, FNS** - The Plant-Based Fitness Expert - (<http://www.lanimuelrath.com>), specializes in helping people who struggle with health, weight and energy levels transform their bodies - and their lives - without going hungry or grueling, excessive exercise.

Lani is the author of *Fit Quickies: 5 Minute Targeted Body Shaping Workouts* with plant-based diet (Penguin) and creator of *Lani Muelrath's Plant-Based Blueprint*.

Presenter and celebrity coach for the 21-Day PCRM Vegan Kickstart and VegRun Programs, Lani is the Fitness Adviser for the Dr. John McDougall Health and Medical Center Discussion Boards. She presents regularly for the Complete Health Improvement Project (CHIP). In addition, she is the Health and fitness expert for Vegan Mainstream and Plant-Based Fitness and Healthy Living Examiner for Examiner.com.

Lani has been a Guest Lecturer in Kinesiology at San Francisco State University and is an Associate Professor in Kinesiology at Butte College. She has a Master's degree and several teaching credentials in Physical Education, and holds multiple fitness certifications including Fitness Instructor from the American Council on Exercise, Yoga, and Pilates-based instruction from the PhysicalMind Institute.

She is certified in Plant-Based Nutrition through Cornell University and holds a Fitness Nutrition Specialist Advanced Credential from the National Academy of Sports Medicine.

Lani created and starred in her own CBS TV show, "Lani's All-Heart Aerobics." Recipient of the Golden Apple Award for Excellence in Instruction, she regularly speaks and writes about healthy living, plant-based nutrition, weight loss, and fitness. She overcame her own lifetime struggle with weight over more than 15 years ago when she lost 50 pounds, which she has maintained easily with the tools that she uses to coach others to be successful with in weight loss, body shaping, and health. Multiple resources for you for healthy fitness, weight loss, and plant-based nutrition at www.lanimuelrath.com.

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Presentations

Lani Muelrath is an internationally recognized presenter and speaker who brings a passion about a healthy, happy and fit plant-based fitness lifestyle to your organization, meeting or event. A longtime celebrity presenter and coach for the PCRM 21-Day Kickstart, CHIP (Complete Health Improvement Project), and at community, college, and university venues, Lani is available to speak at wellness events, health conferences, and private groups.

Popular topics from Lani include:

➤ **Healthy, Happy, and Fit!**

Eat like it matters. Move like you mean it.

What matters to you? Your health? Your weight? Your energy levels? The environment? Your personal presence and mission? You make a difference and send a message by the choices you make. It MATTERS how we eat - for each one of these elements. We teach by how we live.

How - and if - you move your body has far - reaching implications for personal energy and body vitality and confidence, your vehicle for expression of your personal mission and purpose. The focus on positive ways to offset sedentarism and the 5 minute fitness solution spell energetic change and enhanced personal expression and happiness - and your personal power as an agent for change.

➤ **The Three Pillars of Healthy Fitness Success**

What you absolutely must have for lasting health, weight loss and fitness success

In order to get what you want with your health and weight, you have to go 3 for 3 if you want lasting success. All 3 of these must be in alignment. And when you get these 3 in alignment, - the food, the fitness, and the mastery of mindset - you become unstoppable.

➤ **Show Me the Plants!**

How To Be Full Without Being Fat, Save Yourself, and Save the World!

➤ **Too Much Sitting is Hazardous to your Health!**

The 5 minute fitness solution to the health challenges of our sedentary lifestyle

➤ **You Carve Your Figure With Your Fork**

The plant-powered solution to weight loss from the plant-based fitness expert

➤ **Top Ten Motivational Tools for Health, Weight Loss, and Fitness Success**