

'Exercised': New book by a biological anthropologist says humans are cut out to nap, not exercise – Here's how we can overcome our evolutionary destiny

Want to feel bad about skipping a workout? Blame evolution.

Daniel E. Lieberman argues this theory in his new book "[Exercised: Why Something We Never Evolved to Do Is Healthy and Rewarding](#)," which tips some of the fitness world's most sacred cows. Everyone knows exercise is good for them, yet studies show most people don't get enough of it. Mr. Lieberman set out to find out why, and the answers, he hopes, will help remove some of the shame people feel about their own inactivity that makes it even harder to get moving.

Mr. Lieberman criticizes people he calls "exercists" who brag about how much they work out and pass judgment on the less fit as unnaturally lazy. Those who take the escalator instead of the stairs are not guilty of the sin of sloth, he writes, but doing what they were evolved to do—saving energy only for what is necessary or recreational.

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In this book, the biological anthropologist hails the benefits of fitness and recommends beating the anti-exercise instinct by working out with friends and making commitments like registering for a race. His philosophy: Any movement is an improvement on none, more is usually better, and it is never too late to start.

[Editor's note: [Find "Exercised: Why Something We Never Evolved to Do Is Healthy and Rewarding" here.](#)]

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