



ALEXANDRA COACHING

Start Getting Unstuck

By **Alexandra Paul**

How to Eat Well and Exercise Regularly
During the Work Week



T

he two hardest things about staying in shape when you are an actress are the extremely

long hours on the set and the craft service table. Craft service refers to the food always available to the cast and crew while they are working, and it basically is like having a free corner market 25 yds. from you at all times. "Crafty" can be as simple as table strewn with pretzels, bagels, chocolates and cut vegetables, or a truck you walk into with fancy coffee makers, jars full of candy and cookies, ready-made sandwiches and freezers full of ice cream.

The more tired you are (a 12 hour day is a short day, and I once worked for 21 hours straight because we had to finish before the snow melted), the more enticing the craft service table becomes, and the harder it is to get a workout in when the day is done.

We all have busy schedules and our personal craft service tables – whether it's the office kitchen, kids' leftovers, buffet restaurants or the vending machine down the hall. And we must learn how to navigate them if we are to feel and look our best.



Working on sets, I developed a few rules that helped me stay on track with both my exercise and diet:

Getting Exercise In:

- **I am a morning person, so I exercise *before* a long day at work.** When I come home at night (or at 3am, depending on the shoot schedule), all I want to do is relax and work on my lines for tomorrow, so working out as soon as I wake up is best for me. The trick is not to let the actual time deter me. If I have to be on the set at 7am, that means getting up at 4:30am (and getting to bed very early). I say to myself “It’s 9am somewhere” instead of “Aaaargh, it’s so early”.
- **If you are not a morning person, schedule your evening exercise times in advance.** Not much gets in the way at 5am, but we find a lot of excuses in the evening – family obligations, work dinners, that favorite tv show, catching up on emails – so before the week starts plan the dates and times you’ll work out, and put them in your calendar just as you would any other important appointments.
- **And if neither the morning nor evening work for you:** Work out at lunch. Walk with a coworker; go up and down the stairs in your building if the weather is inclement; join a nearby gym.

If you have a crazy schedule during the week, plan to exercise on Saturday and Sunday so you only have to fit in a couple workouts on work days.

Eating well with Temptation all around you:

- **I never rely on anyone else to feed me.** I always bring my own (vegan) snacks to the set, which keeps me away from craft service so I do not have to even see any tempting treats. I bring fruit, nuts and oatmeal with protein powder but you need what fills you up, tastes good and is easy to prepare.
- **I am totally self reliant.** I bring my own water bottle, fork and cup/bowl to the set. This is mostly because I hate using disposable plastics, but having everything I need with me means I have no excuses not to eat what I bring!

It takes thought and planning to eat well and exercise regularly when we are busy with work. However, it will get easier as it becomes a habit, and the effort will **ALWAYS** be worth it.



Alexandra Paul is a vegan actress who has appeared in over 100 films and television shows. She is also a certified health & wellness coach.

www.AlexandraCoaching.com