



Broadcast Transcript

Broadcast: Fit Over 50 – Part 2

Guest(s): Dr. Walt Larimore

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Dr. James Dobson: Hello everyone. You're listening to Family Talk, the radio broadcasting ministry of the James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Dr. James Dobson, and thank you for joining us for this program.

Roger Marsh: Well welcome to Family Talk, the broadcast division of the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute. I'm Roger Marsh, and in just a moment, you're going to hear the second part of Dr. Dobson's enlightening conversation with his good friend, Dr. Walt Larimore. They'll be discussing Dr. Larimore's book called *Fit Over 50: Make Simple Choices Today for a Healthier, Happier You*. On the last edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, Dr. Walt Larimore explained how we can achieve balanced health in all areas of our life. And on today's program, Dr. Dobson and Dr. Larimore will dive deeper into specific challenges that people face in the health category. Now, before we begin, let me remind you of Dr. Walt Larimore's impressive background. After four decades as a family physician, during which time he delivered more than 1500 babies, Walt retired from direct patient care in 2021. Throughout his distinguished career, he's received numerous honors, including the prestigious Thomas W. Johnson Award, recognizing him as America's outstanding family physician educator.

In 2019, Dr. Larimore was given the lifetime Achievement Award by Marquee Who's Who in America, a rare honor bestowed on fewer than 5% of their listees. Dr. Walt Larimore and his childhood sweetheart, Barb, had been married for almost 50 years and they recently left their Colorado home to transplant to Georgia to be closer to their two grown children and their two beautiful granddaughters. Well, there's a lot of ground to cover, so let's join Dr. James Dobson and Dr. Walt Larimore right now as they continue their conversation about living fit over 50. Here on Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk.

Dr. James Dobson: You have the results of some research done on prayer in your book, and I think you wrote that only 50% of the people pray every day.

Dr. Walt Larimore: Yeah. It seems...

Dr. James Dobson: Half the people don't pray.

Dr. Walt Larimore: We've got kids that say, what's God's will for me? Well, God's will for you is that you rejoice always pray without pray, without ceasing, that it becomes spiritual breathing for you as you go through the day. People say, well, I don't have time

to pray, and I'll say, you do it as you go. You don't have to necessarily, it's nice to carve out time. And was it Charles Wesley who said in his busiest time of his life, he didn't have time not to pray and prayed an hour every day, but God waits to hear from us.

Dr. James Dobson: Okay, let me ask the question that some are thinking, I don't know how to pray. You're talking about walking into the presence of the God of the universe and making a little speech to Him. I don't know how to do that. Help them.

Dr. Walt Larimore: Yeah, Jim, my encouragement to people is that prayer is not some sort of formal mystic activity, it's just conversation. So however you imagine God, a father, a grandfather, a best friend, a mentor, a guide, a coach, just talk to Him. And maybe that's questions, maybe it's listening to Him by reading his Word. I use a little thing that I was taught by my mentor and that was if today is the 30th of the month and I read Proverbs 30, that's my discipline for the last 45 years, and then I read Psalm 30, it's the 30th of the month, so I read Psalm 30 and then I add 30. I read Psalm 60 and Psalm 90 and Psalm 120 and it takes 10 minutes, 15 minutes. Maybe it's journaling for you even if you have never journaled. I have a young man I'm mentoring now.

He doesn't write, he doesn't journal, and yet he's begun, just got a little tiny notebook. It's real thin. And every morning he just takes a few minutes. He either writes God a question or two or a statement or two or a request or two. Use an old, I call it the cats of confession in the morning just to confess anything where I've fallen short. And the A of CATS is adoration. It's just God, I adore you and Jim, we live in Colorado Springs. We can look out our window and just adore the Lord with the Rockies that we see it. Confession, adoration, Thanksgiving. Lord, thank you for life. Thank you for what you've given me. Thank you for even giving me the desire to pray and that s of CATS is supplication. Just whatever your requests are, but write that down and then visit it the next day and the next day and the next day. And Jim, that tiny little seed, that tiny little spark, God, haven't you found God will honor that?

Dr. James Dobson: Oh, absolutely.

Dr. Walt Larimore: You'll want not to miss that time. It becomes an intimate special time.

Dr. James Dobson: When I'm going out the door, even if we've already prayed, there are times when we will say, we dare not leave this house this day without going in the spirit of the Lord. We don't know what waits out there for us. It may be good news, bad news. We don't know what's there, He does. Just ask for His blessing on this day. Not that everything will go right because that's not life, but knowing that He's there and He's with us and He understands, it just puts a different cast on the entire day. Lemme go back to what we were talking about before last time. Talk about sleep, especially as you get older. There is a myth, I believe that you need less sleep as you get older. I don't find that true in my life. Is that a myth?

Dr. Walt Larimore: That's a total myth. The research doesn't show that at all. God has designed us for rest. He's designed us not only for the Sabbath rest, but He's designed us for sleep. Those who have computer thinking, this is your time to reboot. So this morning I was doing some writing and things were kind of junking up and I knew it's time to reboot. I just need to clean out some of those old files and restart with resting the computer, rebooting and everything worked better, and that's how sleep's designed to be. But I also believe that sleep, this is just my individual belief, is that sleep's a time that God in our spirit communicates that God in our spirit communicates with us subconsciously. Don't you find there's times that you'll wake up in the morning and you feel like the Lord's reminded you of something and I think that happens with sleep.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, the book we're talking about is *Fit Over 50: Make Simple Choices Today for a Healthier, Happier You*. This book is loaded with practical advice. In the program yesterday, you said you don't talk at all about dieting, and I understand that, but you do talk about diets.

Dr. Walt Larimore: Oh, but nutrition, it's critical. Yes, it's critical. In our country, we're the only advanced civilization in the world that does not regulate natural medicines: herbs, vitamins, and supplements. So much can be said in advertising and on the internet and tv.

Dr. James Dobson: A lot of junk, too.

Dr. Walt Larimore: Junk. That's just not true. But what is crystal clear is that good nutrition benefits us from our head to our toe. And so every year the U.S. News and World Report gathers together between 60 and 90 nutritional and health experts, and they look at all of the literature on all of the nutrition plans, all of the diets, and then they rate them based upon the evidence of what's the best diet for a diabetic or someone with cardiovascular disease or someone who wishes to lose weight, for example, which the best commercial plan. And they rate them all and I think they rate between 60 and 70 plans. And in the most recent year...

Dr. James Dobson: Let me guess, it's the Mediterranean diet.

Dr. Walt Larimore: By far, by far. And it's not that the Mediterranean diet is a particular specific diet, it's just that it is a diet from around the Mediterranean countries. And the Mediterranean diet in Italy is far different than Southern France, which is far different from Spain, which is far different from Northern Africa. But they have similarities.

Dr. James Dobson: Okay. What is it?

Dr. Walt Larimore: Well, the similarities are lots of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, dairy products. Most of them have a little bit of wine, but you don't have to have that component if you're not led that way. Not a lot of highly saturated meat, not a

lot of red meat, but there's freedom in that area. So it's a good nutritious, wholesome natural diet.

Dr. James Dobson: When I think of Italy, I think a pasta, but you don't mention that.

Dr. Walt Larimore: We don't because some of the pasta can be helpful, especially in the milieu of that entire nutritional plant. If it's just pasta by itself, well then, you've got a lot of starch there, more of the negative carbs. If you think in terms of protein, carbohydrates and fat, there are good and bad forms of each. There's good fat and there's bad fat and there's good carbs and there's bad carbs and there's good protein and there's bad protein. So even with pasta having a whole grain pasta is a little bit healthier than one that's not. But the pasta is not the main part of the meal, it's a small part of the meal. So it's actually in Italy, just a small part of one of the courses and the pasta dishes in Italy are very small. It's not like ordering a pasta dish here in America where you can feed a family of five with it.

Dr. James Dobson: How about the red sauces? Is that included in the Mediterranean diet?

Dr. Walt Larimore: It is. It is.

Dr. James Dobson: That's what I think of.

Dr. Walt Larimore: Well, because it's the stew and cooked tomatoes, and it's interesting that tomatoes is a wonderfully healthy food, but in a stewed cook fashion may even have more health benefits. Some of the nutritionists tell us.

Dr. James Dobson: This book depends a whole lot on discipline. You don't talk about that, but that's really what it is. In order to maintain a healthy lifestyle, you do have to exercise discipline at all levels, exercise of what you eat and seeing a physician regularly. There's a lot of discipline involved here. How do you get that if you don't have it?

Dr. Walt Larimore: Let's use you as an example. So when you and I first met, I think you had at that day, just walked for the 2900th day or something. What was your largest number in all?

Dr. James Dobson: I don't know, but it's gone on for 26 years.

Dr. Walt Larimore: Well, the first day you decided to start walking every day. You didn't walk five miles. What'd you walk?

Dr. James Dobson: I had just had a heart attack, so I had to work my way up and out of that.

Dr. Walt Larimore: Bingo.

Dr. James Dobson: It's amazing what that exercise did.

- Dr. Walt Larimore: Bingo, but you had to start with a small step. So the premise of this book is that look at these steps and then pick one that's simple that you want to do that you can do and start it and start slowly and then when you have success with that step, then out of the 200, pick the next one that you want to do, but don't do it by yourself. If you live alone, pick a friend or an accountability partner that will join you in this journey to health. Or if it's your family, maybe it's your kids or maybe it's your grandkids. For me, it's Anna-Kate and Sarah who Skype Barb and I or FaceTime Barb and I every week. And what step are you taking now, Papa? They call Barb, Honey. What step are you taking now they're a little accountability partners.
- Dr. James Dobson: My wife Shirley has a lifelong commitment not to sweat. She hates exercise, she hates it and she knows she has to do it. She knows she must, and yet she fights it like crazy and I've had great difficulty getting her to come down to our exercise place, which is in the basement, and I don't like going down there by myself. I want her to come with me. And so I've kind of hounded her about it. Finally one day she came down and she was carrying her little white shoes. She has very small feet, and she said, "Okay, I give up. I'm going to do it. I'm going to do it. I'm starting today. This is the day I'm going to put these shoes on. I'm going to get on the treadmill and I'm going to exercise every day. But before I do, I've got a phone call to make." She ran up the stairs and she didn't come back and one year later those little white shoes were still leaning against the wall. She has now done it and she is doing it. I'm very proud of her.
- Dr. Walt Larimore: Well, it may have been a year ago or whenever it was that that would not be the step for her to pick. It might be something else, but then find someone to...
- Dr. James Dobson: Well, there wasn't a whole lot she would've picked.
- Dr. Walt Larimore: In fact, we've got information about the research now they call it "bathing in nature" of the health benefits of getting outside, even research in the urban cities of people who will go and just sit in a park or sit in a green space or even an empty lot, but to get outside a little fresh air, a little green and the health benefit that that has emotionally and the health benefit that it has physically. Well, can you combine a little quiet time with a little walking, with a little sitting outside or maybe walking at... but how can you put some of these things together where you have a healthy meal, but you have it with a couple of friends or maybe a couple that you're mentoring. So how can you find some steps you like, begin to do 'em with someone else that'll hold you accountable and be a partner with you, and then begin to see these proven techniques blossom in your own life.
- Dr. James Dobson: What happens when you have a patient who plays by the rules? He's not healthy and he knows it and he believes you and begins to change his life. What happens to his demeanor and his emotional stability is almost an inevitable consequence from doing that.

Dr. Walt Larimore: Well, what's interesting is a couple feedbacks that people get as they begin to get healthier is people say they look younger. They'll say, what vitamin are you taking? Or what's your simple technique? You look younger, you look better. But as really overweight people begin to lose weight, they can start getting negative feedback because people say, what's wrong with you? Are you sick? Because you're actually getting to a normal weight. And it's so uncommon in our society now that you begin to look abnormal, but it gives you a chance to testify, a chance to bear witness if you would that. No, I'm just eating better. I'm beginning to work out. I've lost weight, my numbers are improving. I feel better than I ever have. Now, where I thought you were going to go is what about the person who begins this process and then hits a roadblock?

They have that TIA or that stroke or something goes wrong. And we talked the last time about how I believe that when you had your stroke and when you had your prostate cancer, it was because you were improving your health that you did so well with those. And so there is benefit even in the midst of the storm. You think of the palm tree that's healthy, that's deeply rooted, and you think of the palm tree that's not, and you think of the same hurricane winds hitting each and one gets blown down and one weathers the storm and comes back more strongly. I think that's the picture of the health that God gives us in Scripture is that we're to start strong, continues strong finish strong to grow, to know Him more deeply and sweetly while making Him known to others. We glorify Him with our body.

And Jim, that's how you started us out yesterday. That isn't just a suggestion, but that's our commandment. You hear people say, don't we in church all the time, they say there's the three Ts. You need to steward your talent and your treasure and your time. Well, let's add a fourth T, and that is the temple of the Holy Spirit. God commands us to steward our time, our talents, our treasure, and the temple of the Holy Spirit. So what the research shows is that the more evangelistic a person is, the less healthy they are, that the more conservative of us religious folks tend to be more overweight. Maybe it's those pot luck dinners, I don't know, but church, it's time to wake up and steward the temple of the Holy Spirit.

Dr. James Dobson: Is this book written for those that have really got a lot of work to do and they need help in getting started? I think that's what you've done here is you've shown them a pathway, how they can address the things that they've worried about. We all want good health, goodness, and yet we don't know exactly how to muster all that discipline we've talked about. And this book starts them on the right path.

Dr. Walt Larimore: And it can be a gift to someone you know, who's over 50, someone you've been praying for or you're thinking for and you want to help 'em spiritually and you want to help 'em physically. What's fascinating to me is, and we had so many wonderful endorsements for this book, I couldn't believe how they came in, but so many people who endorsed the book said, could you change the name because everything you talk about here applies to younger people also.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, it's not just over 50.

Dr. Walt Larimore: So read it before you give it away. I think you'll find benefit.

Dr. James Dobson: Well, in the program yesterday, Walt, you talked about four wheels to health. Tell us what those four wheels are again. Summarize for us what we have just heard.

Dr. Walt Larimore: Well, when people are lifting barbells, they'll do reps or they're doing pushups and they'll do reps. And so you can remember that exercise term, REPS. And so the R is relationships. It's being in healthy, non-toxic, accountable, loving relationships with family and with others, with family, friends, your faith community. The R is REPS. The E is for emotional and mental health that we work to be as emotionally healthy as we can. And there's not many people in this room are listening to this program that haven't had emotional scars in the past that don't carry emotional burdens and learning to heal from those and grow from those is the second of the four wheels.

Dr. James Dobson: In the book you refer to that arena with two words, avoiding anger and forgiveness.

Dr. Walt Larimore: Forgiveness, two chapters, one on each: anger, cynicism, bitterness, eats at a person's soul. Unforgiveness, as we've always heard the analogy, unforgiveness is trying to poison someone else by drinking dilute cyanide. You harm yourself, you eat out your own heart. Jesus commands us to forgive others as He forgives us. And so that doesn't mean you forget. In fact, I don't think we do forget, but it means forgiving. It's an ongoing active process. Spend a whole chapter talking about the health benefits of forgiveness and the health harms of unforgiveness. And the same thing happens with anger, cynicism, and bitterness. If we've got people listening that are angry people, they need to learn to deal with that. And that may actually require some pastoral counseling or even a Christian counselor to help you figure out how to overcome that. I think the easiest way I envision it is in my mind, all anger comes from unmet expectations that if you expect something mildly and it doesn't happen, you'll be disappointed. If you expect something strongly and it doesn't happen, you'll be angry. So if you get angry, to me the simple thing is fear. What was I expecting? And then Jim, then critical question is, is that expectation righteous or not?

Dr. James Dobson: Dr. Arch Hart, who was a guest on this program many, many years ago, you know him.

Dr. Walt Larimore: Wonderful man.

Dr. James Dobson: And he had the best definition for anger and forgiveness. In a simple phrase, he says, "forgiving is giving up my right to hurt you for hurting me." It's letting it go. It's not saying the other person was not wrong in what that person did. The chances are he or she was. But it is saying, "I'm not going to hold you

accountable for that. I'm going to give up my right to strike back at you for hurting me."

Dr. Walt Larimore: Do you remember when you were interviewing R.T. Kendall from Westminster?

Dr. James Dobson: That was a wonderful program.

Dr. Walt Larimore: *Total Forgiveness* was the book, and he looked at you and he said, Dr. Dobson, if I choose not to forgive someone, I am not giving them what I've asked God to give me. It may not be an exact quote.

Dr. James Dobson: That's beautiful. I think it is.

Dr. Walt Larimore: It was powerful.

Dr. James Dobson: Yeah, that when we were at Focus on the Family, that book and that interview was number one for the year.

Dr. Walt Larimore: And no surprise. Forgiving is living and I encourage you to explore the chapter on anger and forgiveness. And if you're dealing with that or someone you love is dealing with that, it can be lifesaving and life changing to help them begin to deal with that.

Dr. James Dobson: Okay, I think we've covered two wheels. We've got about 30 seconds for the other two.

Dr. Walt Larimore: So R-E-P-S, REPS. So the relationship, health, E is the emotional health, P is the physical health, and as we've talked about for two shows now, S is spiritual health. And for any of our listeners who are wrestling with that who haven't yet come to peace with God, the gospels explained in this book, read it, pray about it, think about it. And if you will take that step of inviting Him in, He will change your life, relationship, emotional, physical, and spiritual, starting that day and forever and ever. And Jim, you've preached that for how many years?

Dr. James Dobson: Quite a while. We are going to close with this question to you, Dr. Walt Lamore, are you living up to your own standard?

Dr. Walt Larimore: I practice what I preach, but only because I have a wife and two children and two grandchildren, an accountability partner and a mentor who hold me accountable. Jim, I don't think I would alone, but the body of Christ isn't designed to be alone. It's designed to be a body. And so find folks that'll walk this journey with you. Prayerfully, you'll be successful.

Dr. James Dobson: Thanks for being with us on these two days. I've really enjoyed talking to you. Thank you for being our guest the 81st time maybe, and let's do it again.

Dr. Walt Larimore: Jim Dobson, I love you and I appreciate you and thank you for this privilege.

Dr. James Dobson: It's mutual.

Roger Marsh: True health extends far beyond the physical: embracing our relationships, our emotions, and our spiritual wellbeing in a beautifully interconnected design. You've been listening to Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk featuring the wisdom of Dr. Walt Larimore, discussing with Dr. Dobson keys for staying fit over 50. Now, if you missed any portion of this enlightening conversation about achieving balance in all four health dimensions, go to drjamesdobson.org/familytalk. There you'll also find a link for Dr. Larimore's book. It's called *Fit Over 50: Make Simple Choices Today for a Healthier, Happier You*.

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Well, I'm Roger Marsh, and from all of us here at the Dr. James Dobson Family Institute, thank you so much for listening today. Be sure to join us again next time right here for another edition of Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk, the voice you trust, for the family you love.

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