

The Fitness Resolution

Contributed by Sonia Clarkson - NASM, ACE, Certified Personal Trainer
January 18, 2008

Getting Started

What is your New Year's Resolution? Will you resolve to dust off your treadmill and put some miles on it? Is this the year you will actually take advantage of your Fitness Club membership?

Most of us know what we need to do. Getting started is half the perpetual battle. However, if you don't know how or where to start, that can be difficult!

First things first. Your commitment to a healthier, fitter you and your success in staying committed for the long run is greatly dependent on you and the resources you have (choose) to help you begin this journey.

What to consider before you get started:

- The Decision: Beginning a health and fitness program HAS to be made by YOU for YOU. More often than not, women resolve to jump on the Fitness Band Wagon due to pressure from friends or family. When the choice is made to satisfy others, the desire to stay committed dwindles rather quickly. The road to a healthier and fitter you is long, with a few hills and valleys along the way. As you climb those hills, resentment will emerge towards those for whom you are trying to change. Do it for you!
- The First Step: Find a Fitness Club that is appropriate for you and your needs. Is it important for the Fitness Club to be family oriented? Is it convenient for you to get to from work or home? Is it affordable? These are just a few questions that can help you decide how to make your Fitness Club experience a rewarding one.
- The Next Step: Decide whether or not you can reach your health and fitness goals on your own or with the help of a health fitness professional.

Choosing a Personal Trainer

In many ways choosing a personal trainer is similar to choosing your hair dresser or doctor. The relationship that exists between you and your trainer must be based on mutual respect. Not all trainers are created equal, so take time to research and find out as much as you can about the trainers who are providing their services in the fitness club you belong (or will belong). Many Fitness facilities offer "Bios" of their trainers. From this information, you can pick and choose the trainer you intend to work with to help you reach your goals.

- Qualifications - The first thing to look for in a trainer is his/her qualifications. There are many Personal Training Certifications out there. The National Academy of Sports and Medicine (NASM) is one of the most prominent certifications to hold. The American Council on Sports Medicine (ACSM) and the American Council on Exercise (ACE) are reputable certifications as well. Personal Trainers come from various walks of life; consequently, you will find that most will have unique specializations in fitness. Perhaps a trainer that specializes in sports specific training, marathon training, pre/post natal exercise, or the senior population is the trainer for you. Decide your needs and hire the trainer that will motivate you!
- Affordability - Affordability is also an important factor to take into consideration when choosing the best suited Personal Trainer for you. Trainer fees vary from Fitness Club to Fitness Club. Don't be reluctant to ask straight out. Fitness Clubs will offer special promotions for new members or special packages for multiple sessions or training with partners. Ask questions!

Once you have chosen a Personal Trainer that suits your personality and needs, it is important to sit with your trainer to discuss your long and short term goals, any foreseeable obstacles and challenges. Be prepared to discuss any injuries/limitations. A good trainer will be able to design a three to six month exercise program based on these factors.

The Road Ahead…

Choosing the club and its trainer is an arduous task, so move forward wisely. Do your homework. Check a club's website, make phone calls and ASK questions.

There are Fitness Clubs that offer complimentary fitness assessments, training sessions or equipment orientations with new memberships. This is a great opportunity to spend some one-on-one time with a trainer.

The road to a healthier, fitter you is a long one, but with the right Personal Trainer, you can accomplish goals you never thought were possible on your own. A Personal Trainer will guide you in the right direction safely and with positive results at the end of your journey together. It will be the best decision you have ever made!!

Sonia Clarkson

NASM, ACE, Certified Personal Trainer

Life Time Fitness

sclarkson@lifetimefitness.com

678-643-1834