

The Perfect Fitness Plan for You

Contributed by Joan Eison

With the beginning of each new year, a buzzer goes off in our heads that says "clean slate, resolve to do things differently." And, among the things we most want to do differently is to be healthier, get fit and loose or maintain weight. With complete enthusiasm, we scour the magazine covers, search websites, TV specials, news programs and reality shows looking for "the magic bullet." Then, we earnestly ask our friends, "Have you tried Weight Watchers? Have you tried the South Beach Diet? Have you tried Yoga or kick-boxing?" You just want to know the name, the website, the address or telephone number so that you can get turned on and tuned in.

There is a key and the key is "routine and perseverance." Experts say that almost any program will work as long as you stay with it. How many of you-- raise your hands--have ever tried the 7 boiled eggs, 7 bananas, 7 hotdogs diet? We have all tried them a time or two and managed to loose a few pounds; however, the 5 pounds you lost in the bathroom comes back the next week.

What we practice tends to become an everyday life habit. Think about all of the things that you do in almost the same way and same order each day. How do you put your make up on? Mascara and then blush? Do you make up your bed and then shower? Many fitness experts say that making a habit of exercise and incorporating it into your day-to-day schedule is what really makes it stick. Selecting a time of day or day of the week that seems like a reward, rather than a chore is very important to maintaining the practice. If you wait until there is nothing else to do, it won't happen. What gets scheduled and planned tends to get done.

Although we know that we need regular exercise to stay healthy, our subconscious often sends conflicting messages, such as feeling silly in exercise clothes, or that exercise is not appropriate for certain ages and sizes. And, many working parents feel that it is selfish to take time for themselves.

Changing negative self-talk to positive is a major step in reaching your fitness goals--or any life goals for that matter. Replace mental messages about "too busy, too long, waste of time" to thoughts of how you will feel overall. Create a powerful image of yourself receiving a standing ovation from a packed auditorium of people who are thrilled that you are working diligently to meet your desired goals. Create a vision that speaks to you about reward and achievement and make sure that you are playing it full blast every day!