

## Fitness Newsletter # 6

# ASK THE TRAINER

Hi all. Send your questions to [fitness101basics@aol.com](mailto:fitness101basics@aol.com)

### QUESTION:

*“Each week I look forward to picking up your newsletter from the table that contains free materials at the church where I attend. I hope you do not mind a personal question. How did you get started in helping people as a personal trainer?” – I. W.*

### RESPONSE:

Thank you for sending the question and no, I don't mind it being personal.

I personally became passionate about a healthy lifestyle after passing the “40-year” milestone. I had been active in sports as a thin, rather skinny youngster, but had never had a regimented practice of exercise and nutrition until a friend issued me a challenge.

He and I were having lunch one day and the subject of exercise came up. He pointed to me and then to himself and said, “You know Dan, at our age (we were about the same age) we can't expect to put on any more muscle mass.” I objected to his statement, but he was insistent. “No,” he pressed, “we can only maintain, if we are lucky, but we can't put on more muscle size.” Again I disagreed and he then said to me, “I bet you that you can't do it.” That got my attention. I asked what he wanted me to do and how much time he would allow for me to give it a try. To show how really serious about this he was, he actually took my measurements the next day and wrote them down.

Well, I thought, if he is this serious I am going to be just as serious or maybe even more serious. I immediately started doing research in the areas of exercise and nutrition. Almost from day one I realized that I faced a couple of challenges that would demand more research and diligence than I had first anticipated.

**First** of all, I realized that I had probably inherited a genetic tendency to be thin from my dad's side of the family, and **second**, I was basically a vegetarian (except for fish, eggs, and dairy products). I knew that because of these two challenges I would really have to monitor my protein and create a balance with carbohydrates and fats.

I did not want to just put on weight – I wanted to add muscle size and to keep my waistline in check (or maybe even reduce it) at the same time. As I got into my program I adjusted my diet periodically to compliment with the exercise regime. I also learned to listen to my body cravings and made adjustments accordingly. Once in a while I allowed myself to celebrate and forego my diet – sometimes it was one meal and sometimes it was for an entire day.

As for the exercise part of my program, the first month I exercised three days a week. The routine was a total body workout with at least one day of rest between each workout. My routine consisted of three sets of eight repetitions each for each of the exercises, with about a 2-minute rest period between each set. That first month I only did three exercises to work the major large muscles: squats, bench presses, and shoulder shrugs. Month two I began exercising four days a week, doing a split routine of two days for upper body and two days for lower body. I continued doing three sets of eight repetitions each, but added arm, back, shoulder, and calf exercises. I usually worked upper body on Monday and Thursday; and lower body on Tuesday and Friday. By the fourth month I started changing my exercise routine every three weeks so my muscles would not get lazy and too used to what I was doing. In the eighth month I instituted a reverse pyramid system to insure both strength and endurance. When I began month ten, aerobic exercises were added along with my resistance training.

What was the outcome? At the end of one year I had gained from 151 pounds to 176 pounds and had lost almost 3 inches from my waist. I took the \$50.00 wager from my friend – gave half to a charitable organization and used the other half to treat my wife and myself to a nice dinner. As a further benefit, others, as they witnessed the transformation I was experiencing, began asking my advice on exercise and nutrition. I proceeded to continue my health quest and took courses that enabled me to graduate from a school of nutrition and fitness and then I became a Certified Fitness Trainer (with several certifying entities) and later a Certified Master Fitness Trainer so as to be able to share my passion.

Since then, I have had the opportunity to assist many in achieving results that have enabled them to feel better about themselves and enjoy a more productive quality of life.

I have learned through personal experience and through working with others that whatever the desire may be (weight loss, weight gain, toning, or just feeling better), there is a key to unlock the potential fulfillment of that desire. And the key does not have to be complex and difficult to understand or implement into everyday life.

Well, I could probably go on and on, but I will stop here. I hope this answers your question and sheds insight on my passion.

Success to you,

Dan

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