



“Summer is coming whether you get your ass in shape or not”

I read this quote on Facebook about a week ago and it made me chuckle, but it also got me thinking.

What are you doing to get in shape for this summer? Are you doing anything at all?

We live in a world of INSTANT and NOW.

We desire overnight “flat abs” and lose 20 lbs. in 2 weeks. We love the ads for programs that tell you, “Melt 2 dress sizes in time for summer” and lose 20 lbs. by following the paleo-vegan diet. It gives you hope because you’ve tried everything else (or at least that’s how you feel) and this time it’s going to work.

The previous examples above are my definition of short-term programs. These programs contain a set of guidelines (eat this not that, exercise 8 days a week, etc.) and usually a time-frame (21 day fix, meltdown, slim body, etc.).

While these short term programs do have a purpose and place, MOST people will require more to get the results they wish for and also to maintain their results.

But since summer is around the corner, here are 3 tips for you to follow if you are trying to get in shape or look better by the summer season:

1. Is it realistic for you?

If your summer plan you just got out of the latest issue of a fitness magazine or Pinterest website tells you to exercise 6 days a week, 2 hours per day, and go no carbs and eat mostly salads for breakfast, lunch and dinner, do you think you will be able to do this for the next 50 days till summer hits?

Now add on the fact that you work a full-time job and just had a newborn baby. How’s the above plan sound now?

Look – incorporating fitness plans and healthy eating habits in today’s fast moving society is already challenging enough. It doesn’t have to be this hard though. So be sure the plan you are doing is realistic for YOUR schedule.

To help you with this, write down how many days a week you can realistically commit to exercise, and for how long (30 min, 60 min, etc.). Then pick another day in which you have the most time to go food shopping (make a list first so you have purpose and don’t just buy anything) and prep your food.

Start doing these things and watch your success rate go up, because now it’s based around your schedule.

2. Are you seeing results?

YES - you do need a fitness plan that is challenging in peaks and valleys or else it won’t change your physique! What do I mean by peaks and valleys? I mean it should gradually increase in intensity as the weeks go on, and then back off a little when you switch programs every 4 to 6 weeks.

Can you just eat better and NOT workout to see results? You sure can, but doing the fitness with the change in eating will make you look better and you will get stronger, which will make you feel better too! Win Win all the way around with the both of them together.

But in the end – are you seeing results? Are your clothes fitting differently? Do you see a change in your body after 30 days? If the answer is no, something is not working and you need to adjust. Then you might have to work out differently or longer. But it’s all based on your results. If it’s not broken, don’t fix it. If it is broken, fix it!

3. What happens after it’s over?

This is where the short-term programs....well....fall short.

Your 50 days are up and summer is here! Now what? Go back to your old ways? Drink a 12 pack on the beach?

Don’t laugh – but if you don’t have a plan for after your short term summer plan is over, then you could fall back into old habits. The reality is you need to have some plan that YOU can stick with for the rest of your life.

Maybe it's just eating healthy 80 percent of the time and eating only 2 desserts a week, or having only 2-3 drinks of alcohol per month?

Maybe instead of exercising 2 hours per day, you go into maintenance mode and do 45 minutes for 3-4 days per week?

If you don't have a plan for whenever your current short-term summer plan is over then you are setting yourself up to not only reverting to old habits, but even going back to the way you were before you even started! Do you want this to happen to you?!

In the end, if you have a realistic plan for your lifestyle that gets you results and can have sustainability throughout your life when things go up and down, then you are well on your way to succeeding for the long haul, and not just the short-term. 😊