

IMPACT

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Personal fitness consultations improve participants overall motivation to exercise

AT A GLANCE

Regular physical activity (PA) at moderate to vigorous levels has been shown to decrease rates of chronic disease and levels of overweight/obesity.

The Situation

Information obtained from the 2011 National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) showed an estimated 2/3 (68%) of American adults are overweight (Body Mass Index [BMI] ≥ 25) or obese (BMI ≥ 30), and an estimated 23 million children are either overweight or obese! The prevalence of overweight adults in Idaho has increased significantly in the past decade, from 55.7% in 2000, to 62.3% in 2011. About one-in four (27%) adults in Idaho are listed as obese (Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, 2011). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimates that the obesity rate will increase to 42% by 2020, driving up health care costs by \$550 billion dollars. If all Americans followed the recommended PA guidelines set by the Department of Health and Human Services (2008) we would save \$77 billion in annual medical services.

Our Response

A variety of group fitness classes have been offered in rural Idaho County over the past seven years (i.e. Strength & Balance, Kick Your Bootcamp) and have had an overwhelming success with the participants that have stayed committed to the program. For example, the on-going fitness assessment results conducted with Kick Your Bootcamp participants over the past seven years have yielded the following numbers: 64% have lost weight; 75% show a decrease in



Participant working through a circuit training workout.

recovery heart rate; 76% show a decrease in body circumference measurements; 75% show a decrease in body fat percentage; 78% show an increase in muscular strength; 91% show an increase in muscular endurance; and 63% show an increase in vertical jump. The numbers show the positive value of participating in regular moderate to vigorous PA, however, only roughly 20% of U.S. adults are meeting these guidelines (CDC, 2013).

While there exists many reasons why adults do not participate in the recommended PA levels, it is crucial to begin to understand how best to motivate them to increase their participation levels. An increasing number of personal fitness consultations have been offered ranging from designing a workout program to working one-on-one with the individual. This type of programming is a highly desired and needed response to the issue of staying motivated.

Program Outcomes

A questionnaire was designed to begin the discussion on the potential increase of overall PA due to participation in personal fitness consultations. The participants, both men and women, range in age from 18–72. The following are a summary of questions and responses:

1. How long have you been working with a fitness professional one-on-one?
 - 3 months – 1.5 years
2. Were you engaged in moderate to vigorous physical activity (3-5 days/week) prior to working one-on-one? If so please describe.
 - 90% responded no
 - 10% responded yes (biked/ran/small amounts of strength training)
3. What are some of the reasons you decided to start working with a fitness professional one-on-one?
 - To be fit and strong
 - Lose weight
 - The gym was intimidating
 - Needed to know what to do
4. How do you generally feel before, during, and after working with a fitness professional?
 - Before – tired; normal; excited for my workout
 - During – full of energy; fatigued but motivated; focused and trying hard; encouraged; engaged; productive
 - After – awesome; fatigued but feel great; better both physically and mentally
5. At times, you may feel it would be difficult to make your fitness consultant appointment, or just do not want to work out...what makes you still go (when you do)?
 - Commitment to the appointment
 - Wanting to achieve my goals
 - Quality of life is improving!
 - Motivation from someone else
6. How do you feel working with a fitness professional one-on-one has affected your overall health?
 - Strong and in control
 - Improvement in strength and stamina

- I have more energy... the trainer is so encouraging and reminds me how far I have come. I know I will be able to reach my goals!
 - Healthier and in better shape!
7. How do you think working with a fitness professional one-on-one could be more/less beneficial compared to a different type of exercise program?
 - Focused attention – held accountable
 - Discipline, motivation from results
 - Someone is ensuring you workout properly... I push harder
 - Individual goals are focused on
 8. What changes – additions/deletions do you feel could be made to make working with a fitness professional a more successful and sustainable program in our community?
 - More availability of professionals
 - Additional resources and facilities

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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