

Future of fitness

It has now been over thirty years since the beginnings of what many called “the fitness revolution”. In the early 1980's if someone would have said “thirty years from now we will see the highest rate of obesity in history” it would have been impossible to believe. But here we are with obesity numbers higher than ever and continuing to rise.

It appears that overall the fittest people have gotten fitter and those who were not as fit have become not only less fit but have grown in number. How could this happen when a few years ago a survey indicated the United States had over 40,000 health clubs and fitness facilities, a number far greater than thirty years ago?

The reasons are that food has become easier than ever to consume and fitness has remained just as difficult to attain. The biggest problem with our food is that bad food keeps getting easier and cheaper to get while good food involves just as much work as ever and keeps getting more expensive. The negative in fitness is that, in spite of the attempts by most fitness equipment manufacturers to prove that fitness is easier to attain than ever IF you just use the latest piece of modern equipment, fitness has not gotten any easier. The facts are clear that society and the fitness industry have failed to improve overall health with low quality diet and low quality exercise being the primary culprits.

Dietary practices will be the most difficult part of the problem for us to improve upon because of the huge monetary forces in the food industry and the strong emotional factors that so many of us are influenced by concerning how and why we eat as we do.

I can be a little more positive about the fitness industry even though it is influenced by the same complexities as our diet. Here are some developments in the fitness training industry that will help improve the chances for people to improve or maintain good fitness levels.

- Greater acceptance for the hiring of fitness trainers has occurred over the last ten years potentially taking the error out of the trial and error of a fitness program.
- Most trainers are evolving beyond just standing beside an exercise machine while the client sits and cranks out the reps resulting in more interesting and effective workouts.
- Personal training is evolving towards small group sessions that help lower costs to the clients and instill a comradeship between participants which holds them to a greater level of accountability.
- Even though good effective fitness programs are still hard work many “old school” methods are resurfacing in the industry and with the advent of better informed trainers many are experiencing how hard work can also be fun work!