

Don't lose weight, gain fitness

✘ It's spring time and with summer fast approaching many people are getting into the weight loss state of mind. A typical situation at the beginning of each year is that a number of people who are nicknamed "The Resolutioners" will become aggressive with trying to lose weight based on a New Year's resolution.

If you were to open the financials up for any local gym in your neighbourhood you would probably see a massive increase in membership and attendance in January and February, and then as March comes around it will trail off quite a bit. This is unfortunate, because a lot of people become target oriented against what they don't realize can be an unreachable target. It's not that weight loss is an unreachable target, but basing your entire goal simply around your weight on a scale can be frustrating.

Speaking from experience, I have found that the best way to reach your overall health goal of weight loss is to put away the idea that you have to lose weight every day or few days. To simplify, you shouldn't aim to lose weight, but to gain fitness.

By increasing your fitness levels you will find it has a positive side effect of triggering weight loss. Personal trainers have shared their success stories from clients and what you see time and time again is that a well rounded fitness regimen, coupled with a modified diet will have the greatest effect on your overall health.

And don't let the phrase "modified diet" scare you. It's not necessary to eat nothing but salads and drink water to reach your weight loss goal. While it's important to reduce the intake of high-fat foods, you are better off to target a balanced plan rather than an unrealistic plan that you can't stick to in the longer term.

At one point, not too many years ago, I weighed 195 pounds. That may not seem like much, but it was well over where I should have been for optimal health. I chose to add fitness into my weekly routine and to gently modify my eating habits over the course of the first quarter of the year and as a result I was able to drop 30 pounds in 3 months.

✘ Now I'm not saying that everyone can and will achieve that sort of result. I worked very hard to reach my fitness goal, and during that journey my weight dropped drastically and became stabilized at the level that is appropriate for my body type.

An important lesson which should be learned early, is that many of the fad diet products, cleansing plans and various "burn fat faster" products are not effective. Not only that, but they are really only going to be useful in addition to an aggressive diet and exercise plan.

I encourage you to seek the help of a trainer, and to find a community of people with similar goals who will help you to drive towards a realistic and reachable fitness goal. It is an amazing feeling to get there, and once you are there it is much easier to stay there.

I'll close with this brief scene from a really great documentary named Bigger, Stronger, Faster (<http://www.biggerstrongerfastermovie.com/>) where the film's director and writer Chris Bell speaks with a fitness model who represents Hydroxycut. Watch for yourself and you will get an idea of just what it means to rely solely on taking a pill to get into shape.