

“In Tip-Top Shape” for 2009

The American College of Sports Medicine recently finished their online survey of 1,540 professionals certified by ACSM predicting next year's fitness trends. And, if you are reading this article you are likely familiar with many of the trends listed in the results...so I thought I'd list a few you may not know:

1. **Children and Obesity.** Fitness programs will continue to address childhood obesity; a top trend for the third year in a row in the ACSM survey.
2. **Comprehensive Health Programming at Work.** This trend is about improving employees' health -- and lowering employers' health care costs. Some employers are even giving their workers *incentives to make healthy changes!*
3. **Wellness Coaching.** Wellness coaches support clients in *making behavior changes* for better wellness.
4. **Outcome Measurements.** This trend is about *accountability and measuring progress* toward fitness goals.
5. **Reaching New Markets.** Thompson estimates that 80% of the U.S. public doesn't have an exercise routine or a place to exercise!

To list all 20 of the more obvious trends in fitness would be like admitting that we are a nation of couch potatoes! Right now, I am changing the path of this article because indeed in 2009, the active individual is alive and well! "Fit Individuals" are defined as the 50 million adult Americans who exercise at least three times a week and participate in at least one sport every chance they get. These individuals have committed to a lifetime of health and fitness. They know that ambivalence and double-mindedness will only lead to a constant cycle of disappointment. But - if you want to reap the many mental and physical benefits of exercise - - then here is my advice when it comes to making yourself, your health and fitness and ultimately your happiness a priority in your life for 2009-

1. Know Thyself – What time of day is best to get a little “me” time? Is exercise something I want to share in doing with my family or friends? **2. Know Thyself** – Where are you when you are exercising in your comfort zone? With your trainer/coach, at the gym, in your bedroom? **3. Boredom Busters** – Mix It Up! The body responds to change so find a few activities that you enjoy doing. **4. Structure and Planning** - Don't say "I'm going to exercise this week". Say "I'm going to exercise at 4.30pm on Wednesday for 30 minutes - and write it down, make an appointment with your trainer or meet a friend! **5. Surround Yourself with Like-Minded People** – Need I say more? **6. Focus on the Feeling After the Workout Session** - The feeling of satisfaction is something to be savored. Then there are the

post-workout endorphins... and the good nights sleep... **7. Stop Thinking: All or Nothing** - Even a 5 minute walk is better than 5 minutes on the couch. Two bites of a sandwich left on your plate is better than stuffing yourself until you are uncomfortable. **8. Reevaluate your Priorities** – I like this one alot. Take a long hard look at what you truly want out of life...and how you want to “feel” while you are here. **9. Remove the Word "Quit" from your Mental Vocabulary** - Our bodies are made to be worked!! **10. Realize...it's not just about looks** - Having a strong and useful body often goes hand in hand with emotional self-empowerment.

As a trainer, the best advice I feel that I can give anyone on fitness and health is...take responsibility for yourself, make you a priority, commit to making yourself better day by day and be kind to yourself when things get hard. Follow this and I guarantee you will see and feel progress, and be happier with yourself. I know you might want to respond with “NOW you say!?? With this economy? With these extra pounds? With no time for myself?” And I would respond with a quote from one of our most beloved Presidents “Most people are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.” Fitness trend # 21 for 2009...Be as happy with yourself as you can be!