

About this time each year, Training to be Balanced (T2BB) takes on individuals with a large variety of challenging goals. These requests range from vanity to first time marathons. Although, T2BB does not consider “losing weight or gaining a six-pack” a goal, one can not help, in addition to performing better athletically, to ultimately just want to look better. Who doesn’t?

At T2BB, it has been determined that how someone looks is 70% genetics (sorry, I know that is not what you want to read); 3% comes from exercise; 5% is nutrition based; 12% is reduction of stress. In light of my little soapbox opinion, I can only support part of this through research. The other part derives from my experience in training the past 12 years. One of the few constant is the repeated cycles she/he endures physically. Individuals seem to always follow the trend of –her/his input (eating, stress) is more than her/his output (exercise, stress reduction). She/He eliminates this cycle only to be repeated a few months down the road or a year later, case in point, New Years’ Resolutions regarding exercise. If you are reading this now...did you make one regarding to train more...how is it going?

Even the media rolls into cycles. The millions of abdominal exercise gimmicks that are suppose to chisel your abs in a matter of weeks are preposterous. One example includes the belt that electrically stimulates your abdominal region to magically produce a six-pack of abs. being a physical therapist assistant (they treat patients with a electrical stimulation device to help *active* a muscle); this is my favorite abs gimmick of them all. I hope your reading this and thinking to yourself, “I know that does not work!” It doesn’t and any claim otherwise is 100% false. However, about every 3-4 years a new one emerges in the field of infracomicals.

“I guarantee that everyone has a six pack.” That is a strong statement. There are only a few guarantees in this world; for example, if you breathe you will live. Everyone was born with a six-pack and still has it...but we choose to cover them with a layer of excess skin. Doing forward trunk flexion (ab crunches) or side trunk flexion (side ab crunches) on the floor will not switch the layers and move aside the extra skin so everyone can see your abs. In other words, you can spot reduce. It is not my rule, it is the rule of how the body works, and it is different for everyone. It is an old school myth that working your abs only will produce loss of fat and eventually your abs will be visible.

Another old school myth that does work for an all around great workout is the jump rope. Kyle Brown, a fitness expert explains the benefits of the jump rope.

Reminisce for a moment back to your childhood when fitness was not a monitored chore but a multitude of fun games and activities you looked forward to participating in during recess or after school. One of the most time-efficient and beneficial childhood activities for physical fitness was jumping rope. Yet as adults, the only group that notoriously taps into the conditioning benefits of jumping rope is fighters. With a little persistent practice, you too can reap the conditioning benefits of this fun yet challenging and time-efficient workout tool.

Not only is jumping rope a challenging workout, but once you develop proficiency it can become quite fun. No more need to stress if your hotel doesn’t have a gym and it’s cold or raining outside. You can take a jump rope with you wherever you travel so it’s the one of the most inexpensive portable workout options. If you are a novice, be patient and expect a challenge. Yet the rewards are worth the practice and jumping rope can become and enjoyable, time-efficient conditioning tool.

My last soapbox tip is from the movie “Guardian”. It has a great phrase by a women that says, “My muscles ache, but it is because I used them...we have been always been getting old...I have lived, loved, danced, sang, and sweated myself through a good life...getting old, now that is earned”. I think if you can embrace those words, being able to move to the day she/he leaves this world, she/he can consider it a good life. We all have bumps and bruises, but if you are breathing and can stand you can live strong and long.

The oldest T2BB client is 69 years young and still skiing strong. The second oldest, 63 years young and will be participating in our group H.I.T. (high intensity training) and our kickbox karate group training that begins this week. He is a whipper snapper and jokes (or maybe doesn’t joke) that I, Augie, am the reason for engaging in curse words not otherwise used in normal workout routines.