

If you have read any of my articles in the past, you may have noticed that despite the time of season, I find a way to condemn New Year's Resolutions. Resolutions do not work! Short/Long term goals do! Every year the same number one resolution leads the pack- to lose weight. What does that mean, to lose weight? Most who use the phrase "I want to lose weight" really do not know the phenomenon it takes to make that statement a reality.

Training to be Balanced (T2BB) has created a system to help hundreds make that a reality. The past three years we have offered a Transformation Challenge that has rocket-launched the longevity of our mission statement – look, feel and perform better. During the Transformation Challenge, teams of five are educated and learn about how to transform his/her body during a six and half-week contest. The team who loses the largest percent of body fat and has gained the largest percent of muscle wins a \$3,000 prize. To measure these indexes, we use four body composition analysis scans that document skeletal muscle mass and fat in pounds, total body water and most importantly body-percent fat.

The transformation concept was to change the scope of people's view on "weight loss" and "getting in shape". We wanted to accomplish an education of the current information in the fitness industry. It is not "weight loss" it is "losing fat" by building muscle. It is not "getting into shape" rather improving upon movement performance. Lifting groceries or a child is an act of performance as much as skinning up the pass or running on Putt Putt trail. Dropping 2 dress sizes, feeling strong and good about one's self is different than dropping 50 pounds of just total weight and regaining it repetitively.

Like a proud father, I would like to brag about some of our members who have lost fat in pounds and body percent fat and KEPT it off, all who began the process in the Transformation Challenge. In a year's time, a 54 year old (y.o.) man lost 21.5 lbs. of fat and 10.1 percent body fat. A 58 y.o. man lost 30 lbs. of fat and 9.5 percent and still going. Our young 29 y.o. female lost 22.9 lbs. of fat and 7 percent body fat. We had a 48 y.o. female lose 17.2 lbs. of fat and 8.7% body percent fat.

In order to achieve these results, our members were taught four important strategies that were developed at T2BB. Our strategies are – *exercise [resistance (strength) & interval training]*, *habitual nutrition change*, *recovery from exercise and quality sleep and reduction of stress*. Together, combined, at the same time, jointly, in conjunction with, and all working at the same time (get the point) they contribute to fat and body percent fat. We will cover two of these components in this article and leave the rest for after the challenge.

Habitual nutrition change means changing habits first before figuring out which type of food to chose. If we have raw steamed vegetables on one plate and French fries on the next, we all know which one we need and should eat. Choice of food is the simple compared to changing a habit for the majority of people. For example, do you eat breakfast? If you don't, how do you start? If this is a habit that does not exist then it needs to be created. Instead of worrying about the type of food to eat, begin a habit with a small bit of something. Get into the habit of putting something in your mouth in the morning you enjoy, then selection of various types of food comes later. Many of us try to change the world in one day....this is a setting yourself up for failure.

Next, is recovery of exercise and quality of sleep are the most underestimated components to reduction of fat and the gain of muscle, which we will elaborate in next article. Many people think for exercise "more is better". If your exercise exceeds your recovery time you increase your chances for injury and create a reverse affect on muscle growth and fat loss. What I mean by too much exercise is; Saturday & Sunday skiing hard for five to sevens hours in powder, Monday, high intensity TRX suspension class and interval sprinting on the treadmill for 30 minutes, Tuesday, intense hot yoga, Wednesday and Thursday taking a kettle bell class and another TRX suspension class, Friday, Pilates with equipment and a tour at Cache Creek. This example provides no recovery for the body to burn fat, for the muscle to grow, and is not that unusual for many Jacksonites. It also slowly decreases overall performance.

Remember, one constant – no matter how strong the mind is in pushing the body's limits of performance, in the end the body wins, 100 percent of the time, guaranteed, the body will break. Thus, listen to your body! With excess exercise/sport activities, no recovery time, the body undergoes internal stress. At that point, the body holds onto fat and slows muscle growth.

In the next few months, make a short-term goal to habitually change a bad nutritional habit as opposed to making a resolution. Make an attempt to rest between high intense powder days and exercise workouts. It is imperative you have a rest day. Keep it simple and enjoy.