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COMMITMENT, by Johnny Nguyen

The word "commitment" is so powerful that people must step back and study it before they speak it. It is, for all intent and purpose, akin to a contract. And people get weird about signing contracts.

As all contracts should be, the contract between you and your fitness is a fair exchange. In exchange for your hard work and diligence, you receive greater fitness. The terms of the contract are clear: the harder you work, the greater the return. It is that simple. You can't get a fairer contract than this.

But many people refuse to sign it. They don't like the terms because hard work is involved, or they fear the contract because it is ultimately a commitment – that powerful force that induces the fear of failure. For these people it is more comfortable to hide among the sedentary, overweight majority who refuse to accept the commitment, the 60% of Americans who represent the norm in this country. This month Scott Kolasinski tells us in his article about what it means to be normal in America. It is a perspective that you'll find interesting, perhaps a little offensive, but overall realistic.

Other people, for one special reason or another, successfully make the fitness commitment. We see many of these people every day at FIT. I cannot imagine what it is that motivates a person, year after year, two or three times a week, to interrupt the day and drive to the gym and walk through the front door for another tough training session. I can only attempt to explain such positive behavior as a complete and utter commitment to making a difference in personal health and fitness. These people have signed the contract with their own blood, because they are committed to looking and feeling great, prolonging their lives, and being around for their loved ones for as long as they can.

If you attended the recent 2nd annual fund-raising event called Fight Gone Bad, then you might have witnessed its participants bleed commitment through every pore as they fought madly for 17 minutes to raise money for prostate cancer research. Without a prior commitment to a regular exercise program, however, this event would have flat-out sent a participant home in a puke bucket. And if you participated in this event, then you probably know how close you came to going home in a puke bucket anyway, even though you trained for it. No doubt, it took a special commitment to go through Fight Gone Bad. This month Analisa shares her account of the very memorable fund-raising event in her article, Fight Gone Bad II: the Aftermath. Reading it may inspire you, as it does me, to train specifically for next year's Fight

["Fight Gone Bad II" Video](#)

Gone Bad. (Believe me, you may be recruited. Read her article to find out why.)

Thank you for reading our newsletter. We read things about health and fitness because we seek answers to questions we have, or in doing so we discover answers to questions we never even had. But, remember, the most important question remains: Was the contract signed with blood?

WHO WANTS TO BE NORMAL? by Scott Kolasinski

I was looking through one of my old reference books that started my interest in sports nutrition called The Leanness Lifestyle by David Greenwalt – a motivating book and a good read (www.leannesslifestyle.com). David Greenwalt is a fitness buff and he has helped hundreds of people of various lifestyles lose weight for over 25 years. I recommend his book to anybody interested in losing weight or preparing for a bodybuilding contest in which body fat must be minimal.

On the first page of his book, Greenwalt explains how the Surgeon General of the United States reported that more than 60 percent of the U.S. is overweight or obese. This means that over 100 million people in this country fall into this category. Are you one of the 100 million?

One definition of being normal is "being approximately average or within certain limits." Well, if 60 percent of the U.S. is overweight or obese, then that would mean that if you are at a healthy weight, you are not the norm – you are in the minority.

So what does it mean to be a "normal U.S. citizen"? David Greenwalt has some in-your-face definitions in regard to normalcy in America. Understand, these definitions cover a wide range of people of an assortment of backgrounds; these are the types of people David Greenwalt helps. They do not necessarily reflect the type of people we see in Los Altos at FIT:

1. Normal is being a man with 25-30 percent body fat. A healthy man will have less than 15 percent body fat.
2. Normal is being a woman with 35-40 percent body fat. A healthy woman will have less than 23 percent.
3. Normal is walking around with a huge Goodyear tire at your equator.
4. Normal is huffing and puffing if you have to walk three flights of stairs. God knows you would never walk them for the heck of it.
5. Normal is earning the right to eat at all the best restaurants (which of course serve portions big enough for a family of four).

6. Normal is spending five full minutes looking for the closest parking space at your favorite department store because you deserve it.
7. Normal is being embarrassed poolside.
8. Normal is having your kids embarrassed for you.
9. Normal is ordering a Big Mac combo with a Diet Coke because you're "watching your weight."
10. Normal is the father who drinks after work with his buddies. Normal is the tension in the house when he comes home half-in-the-bag. Normal is the fear and confusion his children feel when they see their father drunk, feel the tension between the parents, and hear the arguing. Normal is having excessive drinking ruin times that should have been good.
11. Normal is drifting through life without a plan and without any real goals, other than making it through the day.
12. Normal is eating a whole box of Snackwells or an entire bag of Baked Lays potato chips because they are low-fat or fat-free.
13. Normal is going to a buffet and eating as much as humanly possible because you paid for it.
14. Normal is setting up social functions around food and drink.
15. Normal is continuously rewarding your children with food for everything they do well.
16. Normal is not becoming educated and falling for "one-fact diets."
17. Normal is relying on your body to help you work your butt off in the office and with clients for 12 hours a day, but not making time for exercise and good nutrition for optimal daily performance.
18. Normal is thinking that you must Either work hard at the office Or follow a healthy lifestyle.
19. Normal is going home tired and crashing without taking a moment to tell the people closest to you that you love them and care.
20. Normal is excuses, excuses, excuses.
21. Normal is claiming you are doing better than you were, so isn't that enough? Good enough almost never is.
22. Normal is using junk "food" to make you "feel" better.

23. Normal is going from one fad diet to another, losing weight, then gaining twice as much back rather than changing your lifestyle.

24. Normal is getting a gym membership, working out for two weeks and giving up because you "just don't have time."

25. Normal is looking at others heavier than you and giving yourself a pat on the back for not being as heavy as them, as you eat your doughnut.

26. Normal is having a blood pressure of 145 over 100.

27. Normal is having Type II diabetes for no other reason other than excess body weight.

28. Normal is having joint problems below the waist for one reason – excessive weight.

29. Normal is a total cholesterol of 300+.

30. Normal is preaching the "I'm a victim"-speech versus "I'm a victor."

As you can see, this is not a pretty picture he has created of American normalcy, but is he wrong? There are many self-help books, episodes of Oprah and Dr. Phil that deal with one or several of these points and how they affect an individual's health. Many points have an underlying cause or explanation that may require some professional insight.

However, my point for this article is not to ridicule the majority of America...not really. My point is that, although we may have excuses, injuries, lack of time or whatever, you need to make yourself a priority if you ever want to excel. We are all capable of more than today's norm. It may require some sacrifices, such as going to bed or waking an hour earlier for a workout, spending an hour a week preparing some meals in Tupperware, not buying processed food, eating less, dining out fewer times with friends, playing more with your kids, using a food journal, etc.

When starting a new lifestyle, it is natural for you to initially focus on the food you're missing or focus on the habits you must break. But in return you are gaining so much more. In general, people who have lost body fat decrease their risk of heart disease, cancer, hypertension, diabetes, arthritis, and sleep apnea. These same people also manage stress better by developing better time management and, as such, they have an improved self-esteem.

Even if you are exercising now, could you push yourself harder during your workouts? Are you not getting the results you were hoping for? The most important aspect of any exercise program is not the amount of weight you lift, the number of repetitions you do, or the amount of time you spend exercising, but it is the intensity of the workout. If you are not forcing your body to make

any adaptations to the physical stress, then it has no reason to use your stored fat as energy, no reason to build more muscle and bone mineral density, no reason to improve its cardiovascular capacity; in other words, you are not giving it a reason to become a healthier body.

I have mentioned just a couple of benefits of being healthy. However, it will not necessarily motivate anybody to want to change his or her lifestyle. The choice is yours: you can settle for the mediocrity of normalcy, or strive for excellence. In his book, David Greenwalt makes one point very clear: you cannot make normalcy your goal and reach your potential. Unfortunately, in this country, our health and fitness level are not normally viewed as a goal worth achieving. Do you?

FIGHT GONE BAD II: THE AFTERMATH, by Analisa Naldi

How much fight is in you? Written in big, bold letters on a whiteboard in the FIT weight room, this saying loomed over the 47 participants that competed in the FIGHT GONE BAD II fundraiser. In 2006, Athletes for a Cure, a fundraising and awareness program for the Prostate Cancer Foundation, teamed up with Crossfit affiliates across the country for a fight against prostate cancer. Participants of all ages and skill levels competed in a grueling 17-minute workout that was originally designed for a professional fighter and has since been adopted, modified, and included in the Crossfit exercise regime worldwide. The workout consists of five "functional" exercises (wall ball, deadlift sumo high pull, box jumps, push press and rowing/indoor ergometer).

In the inaugural year, 2006, Team CrossFIT Los Altos raised just over \$22,000 and completed 10,000 repetitions. We were the national champions for the highest number of repetitions completed by one affiliate! With every intention to repeat our championship this year, our team expanded from clients and trainers, to FIT KIDS, FIT TEENS, FIT BUDDIES, and friends from outside our FIT family. Our team recruited as many participants as we could in order to raise as much money as possible for prostate cancer research. We reached a whopping \$33,180 in donations, beating last year's amount by \$11,000.

As a team, we completed 12,389 repetitions on the day. Our top three men's competitors were Scott Kolasinski (372 repetitions), Jimmy Noriega (350), and Chris Barbin (348). Our top women's competitor was Rebecca Voigt (372), who flew up to join our team from southern California for the second year in a row! Our other top women's competitors were Heather Galuteria and me, each with scores of 351 reps. Our top kid competitor was Nathaniel Wipfler (359), who was also the star of FITKid Spotlight for the month of September. Everyone left on Saturday feeling exhausted but rejuvenated.

I have to be completely honest here. The Monday following Fight Gone Bad, when I received the results from across the nation, I was completely bittersweet. The bitterness was a result of our 4th place finish in total repetitions completed, along with the fact that Petrenak Fitness (Santa Monica) beat us in fundraising for the second year in a row. However, as fast as I realized I was bitter, I realized how sweet our entire event actually was. We not only completed over 2,000 repetitions more than last year, but we bested last year's donation by \$11,000, and we received \$3,000 more than what we set out to raise. We had every single type of participant you could imagine to represent Team CrossFIT Los Altos. We had 7-year old FIT KIDS, 15-year old FIT TEENS, FIT BUDDIES, and non-local athletes drive and fly here to be a part of the fight. We had a facility full of family and friends, some with signs, many with cameras, cheering, screaming, coaching, counting, and thriving off of the massive energy exuded from those participating.

While talking with Scott Zagarino, the Managing Director for the Athletes for a Cure organization, I also realized that our "sweet" is so much more than we actually realize! We are 1 of 3 (that's right, only THREE!) affiliates that allowed children and "non-Crossfitters" to participate in our event and represent team CrossFIT Los Altos. He said he was blown away by how our facility managed to place in two categories AND keep with the spirit of the event... raising community awareness and support through a feverishly difficult workout. On top of that, CrossFIT Los Altos is featured on You Tube with a Fight Gone Bad II highlight reel that was professionally edited.

So, to revert back to my comment above, I was bittersweet. Fortunately, the sweet outshined the bitter here, and the Fight Gone Bad II aftermath is surrounded by feelings of accomplishment, success, passion, and a killer instinct to take back our title next year. And next year will be even bigger, yet. We'll need more fighters and, judging by the size of our FIT family, we hope to have the biggest team in the country next year. Until then, thank you so much for all of your support, both financially and morally. Thank you for your belief in our athletes and yourselves! Thank you for representing the FIT family and the true spirit of the event! Remember, train hard, play hard, FIGHT hard.

FIT Client of the Month: Carol Eder

Name: Carol Eder

Age: 48

FIT member since: January, 2003

Goals:

-When Carol started thinking about joining FIT, she was unhappy with her body and energy level. She was intrigued by the thought of a personal trainer and looked at it as a way to "have no excuses." When she started, she was working a ton and playing mom, so without any specific fitness goals, her first trainer suggested she aim for "Madonna arms." She wanted to improve her upper body strength, so that was her starting point. Over the past few years, she took a leave of absence from work, and refreshed her fitness goals. She wanted to be able to run around her block without stopping, and to do 1 full pull-up. Within three months, the running goal was met! Where does that leave her? Complete a full Ironman and still do 1 full pull-up.

Celebration:

Completed her first ½ Ironman in August, 2007 with a sub-7 hour time.

What Carol loves about FIT:

Josie- because she transformed my attitude about weight lifting and achieving goals and because she gave me nuts and chews on my birthday.

Analisa- because she is so good with me and my children, teaching us new skills, and also because of the way she says "you're awesome dude" in that throaty, basketball coach voice.

Gabe- because he started Crossfit and because he's like those palace guards in England who are not supposed to smile on the job. My FIT workout partner Julie and I enjoyed trying "break" him.

Johnny- because he is so encouraging and because he also gave me chocolate on my birthday. [This was to guarantee that you'll be here for a long while! - JN]

Manny- because he is so patient!! ... And such a good teacher.

Kris- because, even though he's not a morning person, he teaches Crossfit at 5:30am, and he always has creative solutions for keeping my knees out during squats.

Joe- because he taught me to keep my foot pointed in kick boxing, and he is always happy.

Scott- because he told me all the good food I can eat during a race! And I forgive him for wanting to take me hunting after he discovered I'm a vegetarian.

Thom- because he is so obviously passionately devoted to fitness.

Tracy- because she is the definition of determination.

Serena- because she smiles all the time!

Jenn- she is the epitome of cheerfulness at 5:30am. (I forgive her for deciding last year on my birthday that my age was too high of a goal for exercise reps for the Crossfit group.)

Shaun- he is just so funny.

Kevin- because he lived in Tennessee and he's fun to talk to.

And Frank, Rob and Karen for being so friendly!

Working out - because it makes me feel good....emotionally and physically.

Keys to Carol's success (from Analisa):

"When I met Carol a couple of years ago, she was training with a personal trainer and seemed to be very happy working out. She worked hard, but there was a little something missing. Then, Carol started showing up to early morning and mid-afternoon CrossFIT sessions. She was suddenly working out harder than I'd ever seen. When she approached me and asked me to help her prepare for her 1/2 Ironman in August, I was pumped! She was like a whole new person! She wanted to push herself and find her limits. She wanted to be exhausted at the end of every workout knowing she gave everything she had to all of her movements. She wanted to figure out what she was really made of. Along with her training at FIT, Carol diligently stuck to her triathlon training outside of FIT which is a perfect illustration of her guts and determination! Let's go get that pull-up! Congrats on making such positive changes in your life! And...thank you for letting us have a hand in it!"

In Carol's words:

"This may sound dramatic, but I believe my experience at FIT changed my life—or at least my attitude about fitness and weightlifting. I don't know if I'll be good at explaining this, but I'll try. There's a positive, reinforcing cycle that occurs with a good trainer. As a client, you are asked to do things with your body that you have never tried or weren't sure you could do. Then you do it and you are asked to do it 10 more times in a row! Then you do it again and you are asked to do it 50 to 100 times in a row!! And over time, you find yourself laughing at the thought that you couldn't even do it once at one time in your life! Then, you look back and you are darn proud of yourself! You find yourself

encouraging others to take positive steps towards fitness and health. You really start to enjoy watching others meet their goals as well. I am still working on setting new goals and achieving them by believing I CAN. I believe if you tell the trainers at FIT that you want to run faster than a speeding bullet and leap buildings in single bound, they wouldn't blink an eye. However, they might suggest that it may take a bit of training and time."

Quote From Carol's Husband

"Carol has always been a very determined person. I've never met anyone in my life who once they've set a goal is as focused and dedicated to achieving it. This is one of many attributes that I admire and love about my wife. FIT helped Carol achieve her goal of preparing for a Triathlon in an incredibly short time. Although she had been doing some mid-distance running for a year and a half, Carol bought her first road bike in February 2007, began distance swimming in March, and in May competed in her first Triathlon. In August she completed her first 1/2 Iron Man and came in sixth in her age group. The overall conditioning that came from FIT training put Carol in a position to be able succeed in these endurance events much faster than I dreamed possible. She has also inspired me challenge myself and I will be running my first half marathon in November (at the age of 52), and a Triathlon next May."

FITKid Spotlight: Jeremy Teter

Jeremy, one of the first members of FITbuddies, started training at FIT last October. When Jeremy started, he was unable to hike or walk with his family without feeling light headed; he could not jump rope, do push ups, box jumps, or even body weight squats. But Jeremy started with an amazing attitude. Every Monday and Wednesday he comes to FIT more than ready to workout and has never once complained about anything! He brings a smile to everyone's face as he cheers on his fellow FITbuddies and always has a joke to make everyone around him laugh (he is definitely Bill Teter's son!). He also has a very serious side and works his hardest at every exercise. Because of his attitude, Jeremy has done a 180 in the last year. He is now doing back squats with half his body weight, learning the highly complicated Olympic-style lifts, running longer distances every week, pumping out push ups, jumping onto boxes and much more. Our next goal for him is one body weight pull up!

As usual, Jeremy (with the help of his father) answered the questions below with a good laugh:

Age: YOUNGER THAN YOU

Date you started working out at FIT BUDDIES: "THE DAY I REALLY BECAME A MAN."

Why did you start working out at FIT? "MY DAD SAID Jen Pleimann is 'HOT.'"

What is your proudest moment at FIT? "RUNNING ALONGSIDE MICHELLE LAST YEAR."

What is your favorite exercise or movement? "LET'S JUST NOT GO THERE."

What is your least favorite exercise or movement? "SIGNING ALL THOSE DARN THANK YOU NOTES"

What is one thing you've learned from working out at FIT? "ANALISA REALLY YELLED AT ME DURING FIGHT GONE BAD!"

What advice would you pass along to future FIT BUDDIES? "TRY NOT TO LOSE 'FOCUS' WITH ALL THAT DAZZLING BEAUTY AROUND"

And now on a more serious note:

Date you started working out at FIT BUDDIES: "October 2006"

Why did you start working out at FIT? "I WANTED TO LOOK MORE MUSCULAR TO MY FRIENDS."

What is your proudest moment at FIT? "DOING WAAAY BETTER THAN MY BEST AT THE 'FIGHT GONE BAD' COMPETITION, EVEN THOUGH I WAS GETTING A BAD COLD."

What is your favorite exercise or movement? "I REALLY LIKE ROWING... I LOVE IT!"

What is your least favorite exercise or movement? "THE RINGS.....UGHHH!"

What is one thing you've learned from working out at FIT? "YOU CAN DO EVERYTHING THE TRAINERS WANT YOU TO, AND EVEN MORE! YES, I REALLY LIKE MY TRAINER."

Congratularions, Jeremy, and keep up the good work!

The Rep

A Negative on Negatives for Fat Loss
by Johnny Nguyen

What goes up must come down, so when you lift a weight you must lower it. And these two actions – lifting and lowering – have been studied extensively to determine their effect on things like strength and muscles mass to rehabilitation and performance. Since many of us are also interested in having a lean body, how do these two actions differ when it comes to fat loss?

When you lift a weight, your muscles shorten – this is called concentric action. When you lower a weight, your muscle lengthens – this is called the eccentric action. Gym rats give this eccentric action an affectionate name: “Negatives.”

In the bodybuilding circle, negatives have mystical power: they are among the training factors that lead to increased strength and muscle mass. Negatives inflict a greater amount of micro-traumas to muscle cells, contributing to the infamous soreness, as compared to concentric actions. These micro-traumas stimulate the regenerative process that leads to increased size and strength. That’s why bodybuilders, whose goal is increased muscle size, are especially fond of negatives and commonly employ them into their workouts.

But do negatives help with fat burning? According to research, they don’t help that much.

A study by Dudley and colleagues in 1991 showed that the concentric (lifting) portion of the exercise is responsible for most of the metabolic cost, with the negative (lowering) portion increasing metabolic cost only slightly. Another study (Caruso, 2003) using 3 sets of 8 repetitions showed that negatives provide no additional net calorie cost. In both studies, oxygen uptake was measured to determine metabolic cost.

What these studies may tell us is that the use of the rowing ergometer is a very effective tool that helps drive up metabolic cost. Rowing is almost entirely concentric, with little to no negatives contributing to the fatigue. It is why FIT uses rowing regularly. Another great tool, though more advance, is Olympic-style weightlifting. Performed well, it typically requires lifting the weight in a controlled but very rapid motion, resulting in a very high metabolic output. And, once lifted, no negative is typically required as the barbell can be dropped. This lack of negative action prevents excessive neurological fatigue so that more lifting can be accomplished. If done with enough volume and density, Olympic-style weightlifting can increase metabolic cost significantly.

Essentially any exercise that requires a large lifting action can effectively increase metabolic cost, leading to greater fat burning.

The rowing ergometer and Olympic-style weightlifting, both a valuable part of FIT's philosophy, are often at the center of the training program for many clients, but squats, dead-lifts, and pull-ups are other exercises that also require a large concentric action, even though they typically include negatives.

As much as I hate rowing, I also like to stay lean for aesthetic and health reasons. I know many of you feel the same. So, please, get on the rower and give me 500 meters.

FIT Announcements

The 44TH Annual Golden West Open will take place Sunday, November 4, 2007 at FIT, Los Altos. Join us to support our local athletes, coaches, and witness some breathtaking lifts. For further information, please check out www.goldenwestopen.com or www.focusedtrainers.com .

In honor of our "Thankful" theme at FIT for the month of November, the FIT family would like to say thank you to our clients for their hard work, dedication, and loyalty to FIT. As a thank you, FIT would like to offer one free personal training session for each referral (family, friend, or child) received from any FIT client. For further information please contact Serena Earwicker at admin@focusedtrainers.com or Analisa Naldi at analisa@focusedtrainers.com .

On your way through the gym, be sure to check out what members of our FIT family are thankful for this month! Thank you to all of those clients and staff members who've shared what you're thankful for and how FIT has been a part of that! Keep up the hard work!

The Longest Continuing Weightlifting Meet in the Country

For the second year, Mr. Dave Corbin is organizing the Golden West Open meet and is making the sport of Weightlifting accessible to the mass. Some call him a very talented organizer, others call him the savior of the sport. Below is a message from Dave to you.

Hello All,

On November 4th, we are doing it again at FIT... only even better! We will host the 44th annual Golden West Open.

We will have web broadcast of the event all day. We will probably have a couple of on-the-spot interviews and commercials go out over the web.

And we have new raffle prizes and more gear to hand out... much of it donated by FIT.

We are adding some BBQ food service since last time many people had to leave to get food.

We have great new sponsors and have some carry-over of sponsors. We have updated the website and will do it again several times over the next three weeks. check in often. www.goldenwestopen.com

But, it is bigger than ever so I am asking for volunteers. We need some hands for moving stuff and setting up on Saturday afternoon the 3rd.

But we really need volunteers for supporting the various positions on Sunday during the show. We need someone for lifter check-in and weight-in, visitor greeting, sponsor care and feeding, judge care, judges, food sales, food cooking, video monitors(dartfish), and general trouble shooters.

If you can volunteer, please contact Rob Earwicker at: rob@focusedtrainers.com

Thanks,
Dave Corbin