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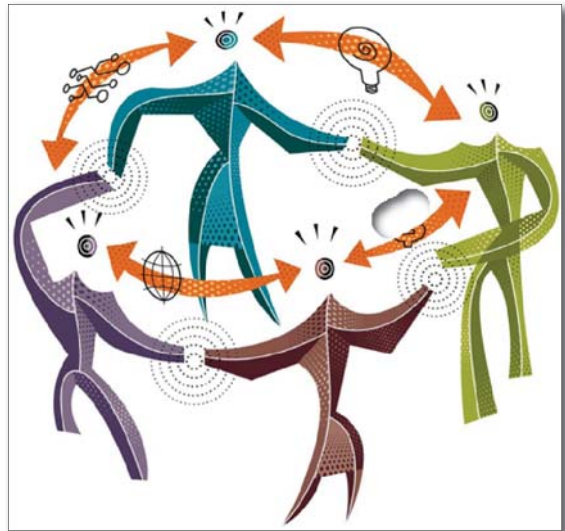
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Solidarity Fitness

By Johnny Nguyen

After college I joined a gym with three friends. We met each other for workouts every other morning at 5:30 before work. We pushed each other, encouraged each other, and talked trash to each other. On most mornings we trained so hard that we nearly pulverized, and on some mornings we slacked so much that the participants of the morning stretch class sweated more than we did. Mostly we had great workouts that burned off the extra weight we carried since the freshman-fifteen, and brought us to a new level of health and fitness we thought was reserved for only the genetically gifted and the mythical Gods (as it turned out, regular mortals like us also got to enjoy great fitness if we worked hard at it). But the greatest benefit from working out together was that we each possessed an unspoken accountability toward each other. Also, training together produced a natural intensity that training solo often doesn't, and we loved this. I don't remember any of us ever missing a workout.



This experience was not temporary. Years later, when I used the Crossfit methodology, I often trained with others at FIT. Those times when I broke my personal performance records were when I trained alongside another, or within a group. It wasn't because I was competing with them, per se, but that the camaraderie of working with others motivated me to go harder. And because intensity is one of the greatest factors to achieving fitness results, never before in my life did I attain greater all-around fitness.

When I later focused on Olympic-style weightlifting, I joined FIT Barbell Club (BBC), coached by Rob Earwicker. My best sessions had always been while training alongside BBC members. Of course, those times when I trained alone were still useful, because even a crappy solo session can be far more fertile than bailing from the workout entirely; but, I always got more when someone else shared the same effort.



I became stronger than I ever imagined, and it wasn't only because of good guidance by Coach Rob, but also because I found comfort and inspiration when lifters to either side of me were struggling under a weight that, to them, felt just as impossible. There is a shared intensity when someone else is working toward the same goal.

Allison and Liz

Featured Links:

[Best Buddies Challenge](#)

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I still train alone, and this has more to do with scheduling than with choice, but I can honestly tell you that I don't have the same horse power as while training with others. This past Saturday, I returned to training with FIT Barbell Club, the first time in a long time, and it was like someone had replaced my heart valve with direct fuel injection, and my lungs with a set of twin turbos. I once again have the taste for intensity.

If you haven't tried a partnered workout session, then I recommend that you give it a shot. Ask your FIT trainer about it. You might have a whole different taste for intensity, in a good way.

You Don't Have to Go at it Alone!

By Analisa Naldi

You swear you just went to sleep and that alarm clock is already blaring. It is still dark outside, your bed is warm, and your workday doesn't start for another three hours. Why on earth are you crawling out of bed and into your workout clothes? Because you are committed to your workout partners, and you know that if you don't show up at the gym, you will not only disappoint yourself, but you will potentially let them down as well.

Working out with a partner or in a small group has been linked to an increase in motivation, commitment to a regular exercise regimen, and an improvement in the effort put forth during the workout session. Rather than cite a plethora of scientific evidence, based on qualitative interviews done around the world in various environments, we took our feedback seriously and right from our backyard.

So, why train with a partner or in a small group here at FIT? Here are a few things that our clients have to say.

"It makes me want to do better! I have a clear and visible goal to meet or beat." Working out with partner(s) with various skill levels, whether they are close to yours or on

the opposite end of the spectrum, reminds you that everybody in the gym is sharing in similar physical and psychological battles while working out.

"It is more motivational! The other dudes push you harder since we are all really competitive. Being around one another really amps up our game." Sometimes we don't realize that we actually are competitive, especially with ourselves. Being around others that are better at certain movements than we are or vice versa promotes greater effort. It can create a group dynamic that encourages positive competition, both within the group and within yourself.

"I love the camaraderie of the group, especially those groups that I have arranged where the women are my friends." Working out in a group is simply more fun! There can be more laughter, friendly battles with our trainer, and say things under breath



Intensity is more fun in a group

when asked to do things that seem impossible! There truly is strength in numbers as the mini-support system that is created within a workout partnership or small group has a positive impact on effort, energy and results.

“Variety is the spice of life. Different needs mean different workouts.” While no two trainers are the same,

no two clients are either. This means that the door is opened for a slew of new movements, some that might not have made it into your exercise prescription had it not been for another group member. On the other hand, stepping outside of your comfort zone along with one, two, or even three other people at the same time is encouraging, less intimidating, and often times victorious!

“I know that because they are going to be there, the likelihood of my backing out is a lot lower!” Being held accountable is one of the largest parts of the battle when it comes to a consistent workout regimen. Knowing that one partner, let alone two or three partners are all depending on you to show up at the same time they do, increases the likelihood of you being there on time, working hard, and making progress. Seeing familiar faces in each session creates a sense of community, familiarity, and a place of refuge.

“It saves cash!” Working out with a partner or small group also reduces the cost per session and is cost effective for those that need to be conscious of it. It enables you to train more often and more consistently by saving a few extra dollars.

“I have found that every experience with a partner has been a positive one and that everyone at FIT makes you feel like part of a family of people that really enjoy what



Technique can be learned quickly by observing each other



Technique can be learned quickly by observing each other

they are doing, even if it is at 6am!” You will get out of bed. You will diversify your workouts. You will work harder. You will be successful. You will have fun. Remember, you do not have to go at it alone.

Work hard. Play hard.

For more information on partner or small group training email Analisa@focusedtrainers.com.

For Weight Loss, Calories Matter, But Don't Forget...

By Scott Kolasinski

Recently, in the San Jose Mercury News, there was an article that summarized a study that investigated whether or not it was the various ratios of carbohydrates, proteins or fats that mattered or the number of calories (http://www.mercurynews.com/health/ci_11784204?nclick_check=1). For those of you that may not have read the article, this was one-of-a-kind in that it was a 2-year study that compared for nutrient regimens. Among the four trials of nutrient profiles that were tested, all were effective for achieving fat loss. In the end, calories matter most.

In a day and age when obesity are at an all-time high in this country, with many people trying this or that diet, and confusion on which diet is "best" is making many fat loss-enthusiasts nuts, this may be a shocker.

A client of mine who had read this article wanted to know my opinion on this study. My view: Yep, calories matter most for fat loss...and? I agree.

That is what I have always said. It does not matter if you want to live on the Atkins, South Beach Diet, Zone, Ornish Diet or anything similar. What matters is just what the researchers for the study discovered: Fat loss is dependent on the number of calories you are eating. Whether or not they come in some fancy ratio of 40:30:30 of Carbs:Protein:Fat (like The Zone) or 10:30:65 of Carbs:Protein:Fat (like the Atkins Diet) did not matter. All lost weight. Therefore, in the end, the overall calories matter most. Therefore, as the researchers had concluded, what matters is not which diet is "best" for weight loss, but which lifestyle can you adhere to achieve your fat loss?

OK. That is fine for some, but there is more to adhering to a certain eating regimen for fat loss that is important. First, what was the composition of each diet:

- * Low-fat, average protein: 20 percent fat, 15 percent protein, 65 percent carbohydrate
- * Low-fat, high protein: 20 percent fat, 25 percent protein, 55 percent carbohydrate
- * High-fat, average protein: 40 percent fat, 15 percent protein, 45 percent carbohydrate
- * High-fat, high-protein: 40 percent fat, 25 percent protein, 35 percent carbohydrate

The other important issue is health. Of these nutrient regimens, which is the healthiest? This topic was not discussed in the newspaper article. I have read this study and its published raw data. Here are some results not mentioned:

1. The highest-carbohydrate group had the highest level of circulating insulin.
2. The lowest-carbohydrate group increased healthy HDL cholesterol the most.
3. The highest-carbohydrate diets and lower fat diets decreased LDL cholesterol the most.
4. The highest protein group lost the most weight, even though it was not significantly different to any other group.
5. The amount of exercise for any of these participants (n = 811) was not controlled. Only 90 minutes of exercise minimum was encouraged. Theoretically, the participants could have exercised 180 minutes (1 hour, 3 days per week) without disturbing their schedule, but certainly affecting the results.
6. Fat loss was not measured in this study, only total weight loss. There could have been more muscle loss in one nutrient regimen than another.

In terms of health, from the results of this study only, it appears that eating more protein and or fat while keeping the overall calories the same will create a healthier blood profile than eating a high-carbohydrate diet. Higher concentrations of insulin are associated with an assortment of diseases: from cancer, obesity, Type II diabetes, auto-immune diseases, etc.

Unfortunately, point #5 is not discussed in the Discussion portion of the study. The authors described the subjects as “eager to lose weight”. This is important because while they were also encouraged to get a minimum of exercise, and subject’s activity level was not controlled entirely, who knows what type of activity they were doing or how much, for how long and at what intensity? This can have an effect on the measured blood parameters of the study (i.e. LDL and HDL cholesterol, glucose, insulin, etc) and/or the amount of weight loss. This is an unfortunate problem with many diet studies – the extraneous, confounding variable of activity level of subjects.



Point #6 is important for anybody wanting to lose fat. Muscle is what we need to function throughout our lives, no matter what the lifestyle we chose. Even our daily tasks of living require muscle. However, when we eat less in order to lose fat, our bodies may have a tendency to use muscle for energy as well as fat. It is a nightmare for bodybuilders who want to look like chiseled masses of meaty muscle when they need to lose that unwanted fat weight. Nobody wants this, especially while exercising and trying to achieve some fitness goals in the process.

And so, it is true, ever since the proof of the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics, that calories matter for weight loss. However, the overall picture does not stop there. What route we chose to achieve this must be bearable, livable, and healthy. The best eating regimen is the one that helps us achieve our goal, while minimizing our susceptibility to disease.

FIT Group Client of the Month, March 09

Partner training group of the month: **Fran Rappaport and Gina Estrada**

Fran Rappaport: FIT Member Since May 19, 2008

What were your short and long term goals coming to FIT and have you obtained them?
My short-term goal was to learn how physically fit I could become and discover how much my body could do. My long-term goals are to complete in Fight Gone Bad (and do well) and to keep my mind and body in the best shape I can for the long haul. I want to remain physically fit until my end.

What do you enjoy about partner training at FIT?
It's fun and I also really enjoy the competitive aspect of it.

Likes: Wall Ball, box jumps, jump rope and sit ups
Dislikes: Rowing and Pull Ups

What is the key to your success from training here at FIT?
The commitment I have made along with having fun and getting support. Jen is a blast! She always pushes us just the right amount. The workouts are always varied and challenging.

Gina Estrada: FIT Member Since October 2005

What were your short- and long-term goals coming here to FIT and have you obtained them?

My short-term goal was to be able to do something for myself and hopefully change my post-baby "body image." My long-term goals are to build muscle strength and endurance which will carry me through so many parts of my life, as well as

set a healthy example for my children. I'd like to continue working out and using that strength to train for my first marathon. Last but not least, I want to continue beating my "Fighting Gone Bad" time, year-after-year. Is that possible?

What do you enjoy about partner training at FIT?

I enjoy the inspiration I get from working out with Fran. Her drive and enthusiasm carries me through some of our more difficult workouts!

Likes: Pull ups and push-ups are my favorite exercises.

Dislikes: I am not a fan of rowing or wall ball.

What is the key to your success at FIT?

My trainer's dedication to me, and the support she has always gotten me to go for more. She says, I do ... it has worked out very well for me.

From their trainer, Jen Pleimann: Before partner training, I worked with both Gina (a little over three years) and Fran (about six months) separately. In many ways, they are very different and definitely have different individual training goals and needs, including over a twenty-year age difference. Some of Gina's favorite exercises are Fran's least favorite and vice versa. Despite their differences, they share something in common that almost everyone who has seen them in action, both trainers and clients, has commented on. They are both extremely committed to their health and fitness, always ready and willing to push themselves to the next level and ready to give one hundred percent at every session.

Partner training has been a great alternative to their one-on-one sessions. While they both have always worked hard, I have seen them both push themselves to a new level in the past few months. There is an underlying, friendly competitive energy that pushes the two of them that much harder. I remember one of the first sessions we had together I had them 'compete' and see who could hold a plank the longest. Fran looked at me and said, "but she's twenty years younger than me." The two of them laughed through the first minute, then there was silence as two minutes rolled around. Neither was willing to give up. Finally, Fran won. Day after day, one of them is helping the other reach their limits and set new goals (even though Fran dislikes pull ups, she would like to "pull her body over the bar like Gina" at least once). Besides being the two 'cutest petite women' at FIT, they both work extremely hard inside and out of FIT and I really enjoy working with the two of them. Keep up the work hard work ladies!



Fran and Gina, and their beautiful smiles

FIT to Sponsor a CrossFIT event in May, directed by Herm

Join us for the First Annual CrossFIT LOS ALTOS Championships! FIT athletes will be competing on May 31st, 2009 to earn a spot on team CFLA at the 3rd annual Crossfit Games, July, 2009. Every FIT member is welcome! Sign ups for this challenge begin on April 19, 2009. There is a maximum capacity for 18 competitors on May 31, so sign up early. The top three men and top three women will represent team CFLA at the 2009 Crossfit Games.

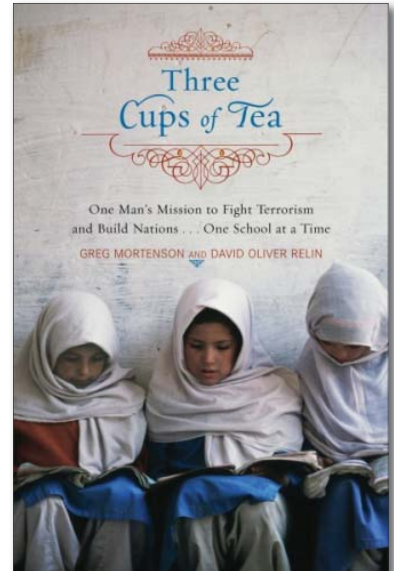
Herm will also be holding four complimentary, skill specific, CrossFIT sessions in preparation for the May Championships! Any FIT members are welcome to attend. All four sessions are held on Sundays, on the following dates, at 10:00am: March 1st and 29th. April 19th. May 3rd.

For more information please email jimmy@focusedtrainers.com

FIT Book of the Month

We at FIT admire and appreciate those who work hard to improve their health and fitness, and we also celebrate those who work hard to change the world. Here's a story about a person whose work helps to make the world a better place. Please check it out:

<http://www.threecupsoftea.com/>



FIT Book of the Month, March 09

FIT Announcements

No matter who you are or what you enjoy, we have an event from our FIT Family for you. Here's what is happening at FIT!

Winter Flexibility Session

Current session through Sunday, March 8
For future sessions, contact: karen@focusedtrainers.com

First Annual CrossFIT LOS ALTOS Championships

FIT athletes will be competing on May 31st, 2009 to earn a spot on team CFLA at the 3rd annual Crossfit Games, July, 2009. Every FIT member is welcome! Sign ups for this challenge begin on April 19, 2009. There is a maximum capacity for 18 competitors on May 31, so sign up early. The top three men and top three women will represent team CFLA at the 2009 Crossfit Games.
Contact: jimmy@focusedtrainers.com

National Junior Weightlifting Championships

Saturday, March 21-Sunday, March 22.
Foster City, CA
Contact: rob@focusedtrainers.com

Spring Cleaning CD and Used Cell Phone Drive

Donate your old tunes and old phones!
Contact: analisa@focusedtrainers.com

BEST BUDDIES Chain Reaction - The Ride to Hearst Castle

Part I: Saturday, April 25
Contact: jen@focusedtrainers.com

For more information
regarding FIT:
Visit -
www.focusedtrainers.com
Call -
650-947-9831