

Fitness - You Are Your Own Role Model

However, a poor self-image is not the domain of fat people alone. There are millions of people of all shapes and size who suffer from the same syndrome. Fat or thin, they are victims of themselves. Themselves you may ask. Think. How many times has somebody told you, "You look like a washed-out dish rag" Once Twice Three times or perhaps, never Who decides that you are attractive, intelligent, or on the other hand, that you are unattractive, stupid You will be surprised at the answer - you! Yes, you are the decision-maker of your identity. Over the years, we've met several people who have joined gyms. Their reasons for enrolling into an exercising programme are pretty limited. Most want to lose weight, while some want to have a beautiful body - like Schwarzenegger's or Racquel Welch's. Very few give a simple answer such as, "I want to be fit and healthy." Yet, it's this goal that should be the foundation for any fitness course. The body beautiful notion is an insult to us because it sets a rigid pattern of conformity over varied individuals who, in every single case, is a beautiful person. If you delve into the history of callisthenic exercises, for example, you would realise that they originated in Sweden in the nineteenth century. The powerful landlords found the sight of drooping-shouldered peasants offensive. To improve their workers' posture they made them go through callisthenic drills to make them stand upright like soldiers. Later, in the early twentieth century, a Dr. Dudley Sargent of Harvard University experimented on these drills and modified them in the hope of creating the perfect American male or female. He devised exercising regimes so that every person would be able to have girth of arms, waists, chests and legs. And that is how the body-beautiful theory came into being, propagating an entirely false image, not to mention the Hitlerian attitude underlying it. Similarly, if you have joined a gym purely to shed those extra kilos and look as much a clone as your ideal man or woman, think again. Of course, looking attractive is appealing. But, you should consider it only as a by-product and not the primary reason for exercising. Your main concern should be to develop your body-mechanism that has a high quality of vigour, energy, and the ability to rise above stress or strain of any kind. And believe us when we say it, a fairly reasonable level of fitness will notch up your attractiveness, your confidence in your own eyes to a considerable degree. It may interest you to know that decades of research have given experts themselves a realistic and, for that reason, a healthier outlook on fitness. For example, they have discovered. that big muscles are not stronger, neither more efficient nor healthier. In fact, having oversized muscles can be as unhealthy as having excessive fat because you have to carry all that extra baggage around impairing movement and efficiency. Unfortunately, fitness coaches who still believe in the old theory of bigger is stronger could be harming their students. In a sense, they are like the over-anxious host or hostess who feel happy only if their guests have overeaten, never mind if they feel like stuffed brinjals. So, if you are planning to join a gym or already have done so, our advice would be to clear your mind as to why you have enrolled. If it is purely to achieve the build of an Apollo or an hourglass figure, chances are you will stop exercising. Why Because your build - though it would show improvement - may never look like what you perceive as the ideal. You'll ask yourself, "After spending so much money, sweating my guts out, is that all i get" Instead, if you wish to exercise to become fit - energetic, enthusiastic, confident - and healthy, you will treasure every positive difference that you will see. Your slimmer body, that vigorous feeling, the fact that you don't suffer from colds anymore or contract 'flu at the slightest wink of a virus will make you want to continue exercising. Simultaneously, you must realise that fitness is meant to make your life a comfortable and enjoyable experience. You are already running by the clock - catching that 9.02 a.m. train, reaching office by 10.30 a.m. meeting your deadlines, targets. You have to earn a certain amount of money to lead a good life. So, you see, you already have a lot of stress on you. To that, if you add the unrealistic goal that you want to look as curvaceous or as muscle-bound as your favourite pin-up, you are adding one more needless goal. Besides, to exercise mindlessly and go on a strict diet to chase that goal is not only inhuman and taxing, but also degrading to you. So, don't delude yourself with these false images. Fitness is all about building up your own image. You are attractive in yourself -an interesting, wonderful individual. You are your own role-model if you allow yourself to be. If you exercise regularly and eat sensibly, you will feel more complete, lithe, strong, and be able to feel the power within you. And your body will be a thing of beauty - perfect in itself. In the democratic world of fitness, you can make your choice - to be a beautiful you.

About the Author

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