



## **Trends in Fitness Training**

*By Joe Stein, President*



What are some of the latest trends in the fitness industry? The following are a few trends discussed at the 2006 IDEA Personal Training Summit in New York City.

### **Boot Camp**

Often conducted in a large room, park or on the beach, this type of exercise class employs an instructor that assumes the role of drill sergeant and leads the class through a series of body weight exercises. The strength, speed and stamina drills simulate those done in military basic training. The intensity can range from easy beginner to lose-your-breakfast-on-the-sand difficult.

### **Partner and Small Group Training**

While training fitness clients one-on-one is the most effective method to develop strength, speed, muscle tone, weight management and balance, training clients two at a time or in small groups has also been shown to be effective. Camaraderie and cost savings are among the most important benefits for those who choose to train with others.

### **Balance and Agility Training**

Having good balance and reflexes is like your wallet: You take it for granted until it is lost. The value of exercises designed to improve balance, reaction time and hand-eye coordination increases with age. Hitting the brakes quickly to avoid an accident, maintaining one's balance while walking on ice, getting out of the way of a foul ball and carrying a box down stairs are all activities that can be improved with training.

### **Post-rehabilitation Conditioning**

In the fitness industry, there is a saying, "Once past forty, every body has something." Joint injuries, metabolic disorders, heart disease, other chronic conditions and temporary setbacks are facts of life for a great many people who exercise. Personal trainers should possess the skills to work with special populations of people, like seniors and Baby Boomers. In addition, trainers should have the ability to work under the advisement of medical professionals such as physicians, physical therapists and chiropractors.

### **Mind-Body Integration**

According to a recent survey by IDEA, a fitness industry advocacy association and continuing education provider, over half of all personal trainers offer elements of Pilates or yoga in addition to traditional strength training. When mind, body and spirit work in harmony, the ensuing integrated training experience expands the limits of personal growth and development.

## **Lifestyle Coaching**

Even if a client trains at the gym four hours a week, what happens during the other 164 hours a week is of paramount importance. Food shopping and preparation, portion control, mindful snacking, restaurant ordering skills, and stress management are all vital to living a healthy lifestyle. Clients who understand the importance of lifestyle management maintain their gains by learning not to sabotage their efforts with behavior that is counterproductive.

As in any business, the key to success is exceeding your clients' expectations. Adapting new techniques, changing modalities and having the skill to stay one step ahead is what makes the hard work of exercising effective and fun—sort of.

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