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INTERVIEW WITH A WEIGHT LOSS EXPERT & MORE!



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Introduction

We will approach this interview as if we have someone who wants to lose weight. Our guest expert has a diverse background. His credentials include personal trainer certification, 26 years of fitness experience as well as several awards as a body builder and owner of his own gym. Using the experience and expertise of our guest, we are going to explore the different things that our client needs to do to get started. We will use a Q (Question) and A (Answer) format.

Goal Setting

Q - What is the average weight that people want to lose in your health club?

A - For most people it's anywhere from 10 to 50 pounds.

Q - How important is the reason or motivation when someone decides to lose weight?

A - The reason or motivation could be their health or their health situation or just the way they feel.

Q - I guess what I am asking is that the reason that will get them to start with a weight loss plan and stick to it?

A - I would say so.

Q - What do you think our client should do to set realistic goals?

A - Well the first thing, you have to do is what I say. That is really the bottom line they have to stick to good nutritional guidelines.

Q - Do you find that clients set unrealistic goals based on a certain time frame?

A - Not really, they are pretty realistic weight loss because that is one of the questions that I have on the data acquisition form that I use to evaluate my client.

Q - Would you share some of those questions?

A Well, one of them would be how much weight do you want to lose and in a certain amount of time and I have them write that down. Most of them put down 10 pounds in like 6 months. If I see that what they put down is unrealistic I will let them know.

Age and Sex

Q - Is age a factor when considering a weight loss program and if so, what should be taken into consideration?

A - Yes age would be a factor because metabolism slows down, as you get older.

Q - Is there any such thing as too old?

A No, especially with older women.

Q - Is there a difference in weight loss plans between male and females?

A - Men can build more muscle mass and women carry more body fat. Women don't carry as much lean muscle mass and so it can be a little harder for them to lose body fat.

Q - Is there anything such as being too young? There are a lot of obese children in the country today and a lot of that has to do with nutrition? How do you feel about children losing weight and what would the youngest age you would recommend?

A - Well with today's hype and my readings and such you can train any individual of any age as long as they understand what you are talking about. They can go to the workouts but it will be sometime before they can work with the heavy equipment.

Plan of Action

Q - What about a plan of action for a new client? Should they fly solo or is it wise to have a formal plan of action?

A - I think that everyone should have a fitness assessment even because a lot of people don't even know where they are now concerning progression.

Q - Is that something that should be done in a physician's office or is that something that can be done at the health club or gym?

A - Most health clubs don't though I do; I have them go through 5 different tests.

Q - Would you share that with us?

A - Sure, I go through:

Blood pressure, resting heart rate, body composition which is body fat and lean muscle mass, I also try to find out what their cardiovascular ability is and I go through a strength ability test. I also go through strength as far as how many pushups they can do and I give them a whole printout that targets what is normal for your age as far as are you normal or below normal and your blood pressure and your cardiovascular ability and strength ability. It will show you everything. Then you can do it 60-90 days from the start and see the improvement. I think that is the reason why a lot of people end up quitting. Because they don't know where they are and this helps them see the improvement.

Q - That goes back to that motivation we were talking about. If they can see some progress they are more likely to continue, wouldn't you agree?

A - Yes.

Q - What about people who approach weight loss through a self help standpoint? What are some of the pros and cons of trying to do it on their own?

A - Well motivation is one of them. Do they have the motivation to do it? Are they eating the right calories for their body type? It may mean they need less or they may need more calories. The exercising is okay, but the bottom line is good nutrition.

Joining a Gym

Q - Do you recommend that someone joins a gym or a health club?

A - As beginners yes I do, because they don't know what exercises to do or how to do the exercises properly. As far as nutrition as they getting enough calories or too many, are they getting enough cardiovascular activity and are they getting in the target zone that they need to be at? There are a lot of variables in that and they don't know if they are making any progress.

Q - Can you tell me how do you recommend that someone go about selecting a health club or gym? Are there certain things they should look for?

A - I would say they need to look for how much help they are going to get besides a personal trainer. If they walk into the gym are they going to put them on a program? Will there be someone to help them with the workout. This is where the personal trainer comes in. You don't want to go somewhere that just shows you what to do and moves on. You need to have your progression checked and help with when to go heavier on the weights.

Q - What should a person expect from a membership?

A - A beginning program and people who will be there to show the equipment and how to use it and to know where they are going. It is important to have skilled staff on hand that knows what they are talking about. When I owned my gym it wasn't once or twice I was taking people through. I was always watching and if they were doing something wrong I would have to go over there and correct them. Because once they develop a habit it is really hard to break. You know what they can end up getting hurt if they are doing something wrong. Most people won't ask for help so you just have to watch.

Q - So what you are saying is it is probably easier to train women than men?

A - Oh yeah, you know what, the majority of the people I've trained I would say that 90% of them are women. When I train them they are looking around going to some people who aren't good at all and have very little experience to draw from.

Q - Are their ground rules that a patron should adhere to or certain etiquette?

A - They are usually pretty specific like not taking off their shirt. A lot of people won't know that in the beginning and they won't look at the rules. When you are taking them through the beginning program you have to explain any rules. If someone wants to jump in and train with you, you let him or her do it.

Q - What about some of these instructional videos people can get? Are they helpful or harmful?

A - They're helpful, it helps to see it and then go through the motions. It's really hard to see something on tape and then do it and see the progression. You have to be really motivated.

Exercise

Q - Are there any warnings our client should heed before undertaking a weight loss program?

A Yes, their physical health. It's important just to make sure that they are healthy enough for physical activity. I would recommend a physical. Had I known that when I owned a gym, I would have recommended it to almost every member.

Q - If they go to the doctor what might come up that indicates a weight loss program would not be advisable at that time?

A Heart problems.

Q - What can you tell us about muscle and weight loss?

A - If they just want to decrease body fat and tone muscles then you have to put them on a program. You don't want to train them like a bodybuilder. It's more of a conditioning training. This way they won't kill the muscle also you wouldn't have them train like 4 or 5 times a week or isolating body parts. You would have them just training basically everything in one day.

Q - Where would you recommend that they begin?

A - First I would get them on the floor. It doesn't really matter if they want to build muscle or decrease body fat. They are beginners and they are untrained I'd take them a conditioning facility tour. Depending on what they want.

Q - What would that conditioning process consists of?

A - Well I have them do one chest workout and back workout and a little bit of legs for about 30 seconds depending on what kind of condition they are in and wait to see how long it takes for their heart rate to drop. Then I move on to their legs and have them do a leg press and everything is like a push pull movement.

Q - Does the length of time increase as they become more conditioned?

A - Yes, it depends on how conditioned they are. If they are really deep conditioned it won't last that long. Most of my client can handle it especially the beginners.

Q - What other types of exercises do you use, especially aerobics?

A - Well aerobic exercise is going to help burn more body fat. It takes more oxygen to do more work. The more oxygen you can take in the more work you can do. That can help with daily activities as well.

Q - Is that done by running or walking or other sports they are involved in?

A - I would say walking would have to be increased. Just like weight training the progression would have to be stepped up because if you just walk the same your body gets used to it.

Q - So it would be safe to say that aerobics is more geared toward improving the cardiovascular system?

A - Yes that's the bottom line . . . that is exactly what it is.

Equipment

Q - Do you recommend that anyone who begins a weight loss plan purchase any equipment to use at home?

A - If they don't have any time to do any kind of cardiovascular workout at the gym then yes I would. Then if they don't have time to come back to the gym 2-3 times a week. Then they don't have the motivation. If they don't have that kind of motivation it isn't going to work.

Q - If someone is really serious what is the single most important piece of equipment you recommend they have?

A - That's kind of a hard question. It depends on what they prefer. Something that you can use for upper body and legs a treadmill is good. You're moving your arms and legs. The elliptical machine is good as well. They are basically like a treadmill but you don't have a belt. You use your arms it has some kind of an arm attachment and you push and pull. A good treadmill or something like that would cost about \$1000.

Nutrition

Q - What is the importance of a good nutrition plan to weight loss?

A - Really it's the only way you can lose weight as far as a good nutritional diet. You want to go low fat and a good 3-course meal. You need both carbohydrates and protein.

Q - I know to lose weight you have to lose body fat, but isn't some body fat good?

A - Well everyone should have a certain amount of body fat. Nobody that I have trained is competitive but the majority they just want to lose weight and feel good. The majority of them they only go half way of what I give them.

Q - What can you tell us about some of these fad diets?

A - Well a lot of them are just high protein and low carb.

Q - There is so much out there like the Atkins and the South Beach. What do you think about the places like Jenny Craig who sell you the food?

A - Well I don't really know much about it but it's mainly just a moneymaking opportunity that I've seen.

There was a guy that I had not seen for some time and he just kept getting thinner and thinner. He was doing Atkins and he didn't think he was getting thinner he thought he was getting leaner. He said that he wasn't eating carbs and just protein. I told him to pick up the carbs and you will see it in the metabolism. I think that is what is happening with the low carb diets. Sure, they are bringing down the calories but that in turn slows down the metabolism.

Cutting calories is not the whole answer to losing weight. You can actually eat more and lose weight. The key is what you are eating. Cutting carbs totally out of your diet is a mistake. You need carbs to provide the sugar to give you the energy, as long as you are eating the right carbs. Those are the natural ones like rice, potatoes and popcorn.

Q - What specific nutritional plan do you put people on?

A - I am not a nutritionist so I don't put them on an exact plan but I do give them a food composition and tell them all of the good lean proteins. It has all the low fat proteins and the good carbs. It has the amounts on it. The bottom line is when it comes down to weight loss is that most people can't do it 100% all the time. I tell people when they start not to do it 100% because they burn out and they aren't going to continue. I tell them do it little by little.

Stay with a good 3-course meal that includes lean proteins and good natural carbohydrates.

Q - What about people who are diagnosed as morbidly obese? Have you had any experience with people like that that have had the lap band or stapling?

A - Not really. I've had some very obese people come in and work out in the gym. But, our skin only has so much elasticity.

Q - What about supplements? Do you recommend any supplements?

A - I do when they start getting into it; I tell them they need to take something mid-morning and mid-afternoon.

Q - Thank you for your helpful insight. I'm sure our readers will benefit from what you have shared.

A It's been my pleasure!