

Exercise alternatives

Promoting the habit.

Exercise is a word that invokes different feelings in different people. For some it's a chore, for others it's a passion and for some it's just a means to an end. In essence exercise is what we do naturally every waking minute of our lives. We walk, we stand, we push and pull, we twist, we lift. Exercise is unavoidable. The correct amount of regular exercise for every individual is what really makes a difference to our wellbeing.

Dave Beard and his wife Elle, run The Training Fix in Ulverstone and believes that regular additional exercise is what can really make a difference in improving the quality of life for everyone.

Dave is a fully qualified exercise physiologist and has two degrees, a Bachelor of Health Science and a Bachelor of Biomedical Science with Honours from the University of Tasmania. Dave's philosophy is simple. Be fit enough to live your life to the fullest with plenty of energy in reserve.

Dave and Elle run the Training Fix as a family business. Their gym in Ulverstone has a low key presentation with the emphasis on the development of the exercise habit in their clients. A quiet word with one of the older clients revealed the fact that, although she was initially very apprehensive about going to a gym, the casual and relaxed atmosphere soon gave her confidence to attend two or three times a week. "Elle and Dave are so friendly and reassuring. And the absence of lycra-clad gym bunnies really helps one's confidence" she said with a grin.



Dave Beard from The Training Fix in Ulverstone.

Dave is keen to point out the nature of the business. "We focus on the wellbeing of our clients, not on making money" David said. "We are certainly not the most glamorous centre on the coast, but in our client's opinion, we are certainly the most effective. The most important aspect of the way we work with our clients is to give them the knowledge and training to allow their exercise routines to become self supporting. A lot of fitness centres establish a reliance by their clients on expensive gym based equipment. This in turn leads to high annual membership fees. We feel that through the correct use of simple routines our clients can give themselves a workout

which will develop and maintain good core strength as well as giving them much needed aerobic activity" Dave said. "They don't have to keep returning to our gym to stay fit once they have the basic knowledge. Obviously we would like them to use our facilities but we don't force an annual membership fee on them. They can pay a modest amount per visit if they feel the need to visit us" he said.

Dave has been involved with the fitness industry for nearly 30 years, his credentials being established through his work with local football and basketball teams as well as surf clubs. He has also gained a solid reputation through his work as a coach for the Australian Under 23s Power Lifting team, attending the Junior and Sub Junior Championships in France in 2007. He is also the coach for Kristy Rootes, who is an Australian National Female Boxing Champion.

He had been working part-time as a fitness trainer until 2000 when he decided to go to University full time to obtain a more thorough education in exercise physiology. "I was very disappointed with the apparent lack of professionalism in the rehabilitation industry on the north west coast" Dave said. "I felt that with a formal education I could meet the demanding



A family affair. Dave and Elle with their two sons at the Training Fix in Ulverstone.

requirements that rehab has. The two degrees I studied for have certainly focused me on providing quality care rather than focussing on quantity" he said.

Dave's success speaks for itself. His business is undergoing slow but certain growth, with all his work coming to him from referrals. "We don't advertise for the simple reason that our facilities won't suit everyone" Dave said. "Our workrooms are well equipped but we want to concentrate our efforts on working with people who really want to be here. Referrals work well in this way. Client resistance is already overcome because the person who visits does so based on the recommendation of others who have already experienced and benefitted from our services" he added.



Elle demonstrates one of the easy low impact exercises.

An important part of the work at The Training Fix is the provision of exercise services as part of the Group Services process available to people living with type 2 diabetes under Medicare. "This aspect of our business is becoming more and more important" Dave says. "Group work such as this allows for a very low key introduction to exercise. Regular physical activity is crucial for people with diabetes as it enhances the management program they are on" he said.

One of the great challenges that Dave faces is the misunderstanding many people have of exercise programs. "The most important concept that people undertaking any exercise program need to consider is that this is about increasing physical activity, not replacing exercise. Many people start a program with us only to drop their normal exercise routines. These routines may include gardening or walking" Dave said. "People who undertake our programs must maintain their normal activity levels to benefit from exercise classes. This is critically important as no major benefit will be gained by increasing formalised exercise and reducing normal routine physical activity.

"It's always exhilarating for us when our clients actually start to get excited about exercising"

"We sometimes find that people will complain about not reducing their weight through attending our classes. In cases such as this we almost always identify the reduction of daily activity as being the culprit. Sometimes it's because a person feels tired from attending the gym classes. This is understandable, but feeling tired is a good sign. It indicates that the body is working a little harder. By combining gym work with your routine exercise and eating a balanced healthy diet, your metabolism will increase resulting in an increase in energy expenditure and consequently, weight loss. The results can be seen in as little as four weeks" Dave added.

Dave's clients are ecstatic once the benefits begin to be seen and felt. "It's always exhilarating for us when our clients actually start to get excited

about exercising. This is the tipping point, when exercising regularly starts to become a habit ... it's a satisfying experience for us to see this happen" Dave said.

The group sessions for people with type 2 diabetes are available only through a referral from a GP. The group work is informal and is based on low impact resistance training. Improving core strength is a major focus with mobility and flexibility routines making up a major part of the class time.

"The majority of exercises taught are designed to be used by the client at home, although clients are familiarised with various pieces of gym equipment. We have a Diabetes Educator from GP North West attend the first class for an informal introduction to the course. The Educator is then available during the following weeks to answer any questions that clients may have. This conversational approach is far better than formal lectures. The Educator often exercises with us which enhances the experience for the clients" Dave said. The cost of attending the classes is fully funded by Medicare.

For more information on The Training Fix please phone 6425 3388 or email tfix@bigpond.net.au



The Training Fix staff will assist in developing an exercise plan that is easy to start and enjoyable to maintain.