

Victoria's *secrets*

My favorite health tips, training facts, nutrition, recipes and exercises revealed!

Are you ready?

The Challenge Revealed.

Do you know how many times I have written this newsletter? I don't know why this one has been so hard to write. Every other month the ideas and words just ease off the keyword. This month is a different story. Maybe it is because my brain is on vacation or the fact that it is the first edition of the New Year. Yes, that's it. New Years. With a "new" year comes New Year's resolutions. I could go on and on saying how New Year's resolutions don't work, but I think I would be preaching the choir. Let's face it, they don't work. They are not concrete enough, there usually isn't an ounce of realism, and they are not very specific. Let's make this "new" year different!

I realize that many of my clients and students are looking to change their physiques for good. Out with yo-yo dieting, and unregimented exercise, and in with the LIFESTYLE approach. So here is where the 12 week challenge comes in.

Taken from research in human kinetics and psychology, a 12 week commitment is optimal for reaching physique goals. Periodization is the term for the process of breaking your training in specific cycles and programs. The same idea holds true for being able to attain goals. If I were to wake up tomorrow and say I am going to be queen of the world, I will probably not succeed in doing this. Rather I need to break this into stages, first I would need to get into politics and become a council member. Things do not happen overnight.

So back to periodization. Most of us cannot go cold turkey into "dieting", nor can we commit right away to 6 days a week of exercise. This doesn't make any sense, no matter what

standpoint you take. Even the extremist like myself don't do that. There is always a logical plan, within a set time frame in order to execute our goals.

Let's combine what the research says.

We know that our body adapts to specific training and diet in 4-6 weeks. Therefore in order to not plateau, we must switch things up every 4 to 6 weeks.

We know that in order to achieve success we must have a sense of what we are trying to accomplish. Setting specific goals, and incorporating these into a periodized plan.

We know that in order to do both we must develop a strategic plan. It is critical that before we begin this process we sit down with a calendar and determine which events (weigh in days, body fat percentage, ability to lift/run a specific number, etc.) that we will be working towards. I'll help you with those (below), all you need to do is commit to me, *mind, body and soul*. This is about creating a better you, step by step, rep by rep.

Regardless if you are reading this knowing you get to face me next week, or simply you read these for pleasure, this challenge is for you. By now you all know I am not here to make money off you, I am here to *help* you become the best person you can be. A healthy you, is a happy you. Let me show you the way. It will be fun, I promise you.

live. love. fitness
Victoria

A mantra for thought...

You have probably seen three words litter my facebook page, website, business cards and blogs.

Dream. Believe. Inspire.

These three simple little words that changed my life. It all started five years ago when I was going through the hardest time in my life that I came up with this mantra. My world was crumbling down from around me, I no longer knew who I was or where I was going in life. On a frantic (I had gotten lost) hike in the pouring down rain, my thoughts racing looking for answers I found my way across these three words. Since then, they have evolved into my lifestyle and my passion.

Dream for more. Believe in yourself. Inspire others.

And this ladies and gentleman is the basis for the 12 week challenge.

Regardless of where your starting point is, what your goals, or where you will end up, I think we all can gain a valuable lesson from learning more about ourselves. Learn what foods make us feel good, what exercises we like, and how a commitment to healthy living can help us become truly happy.

The plan. **Phase 1: Dream - Weeks 1-2 Preparation Phase**

What do you want to achieve? Are you looking to lose weight, gain strength or perform a great feat like a 10 km run or triathlon? *Rome wasn't built in a day*, and you will not be either. This is phase is learning about how to prepare food, cook healthy recipes and commit yourself to a regimented exercise regime. It is to create your base. Will you learn it all in 4 weeks? No, absolutely not, I am still learning .

Beginning Monday January 17th you will begin your journey. Keep in mind most of your physique goals come from what goes into your mouth. You might already be following a diet regime, great. Maybe you need some more assistance (check out my website or email me please). This is about clean eating from making your own food. Keep a food journal, document what foods make you feel good, when you poop, when you feel bloaty. Record it all. You might be surprised to learn something about your food intake. Be honest with yourself, it will pay off in the end. Like I said, no one can go cold turkey. Be realistic, saying you will never have sugar or alcohol again is just silly. Instead pick one night a week to hog wild, maybe it is a dinner out or birthday cake. Eventually this PRE-PLANNED night of "cheating" will be no longer needed. When I first began my journey into fitness every Saturday morning I had my re-feed meal (a purposeful "cheat" meal), soon it was only every other week that I craved it, and then soon after I no longer feel that need. Instead I have filled the niche for bad foods by remaking and reinventing my old favourites.

As for exercise. Commit yourself to exercise, regimented exercise. We are creatures of habit. Pick times that are un-negotiable, "M/W/F 8am I will be in the gym no matter what". Join a bootcamp, work with a trainer or buddy up. We are more likely to succeed when there are others watching our backs.

Phase 2: Believe- Weeks 3-14 Development Phase

Now that you know you can do this, believe in yourself. Your goals might be closer then you think. This is where the magic happens. You will see that although initially your goal might have been to lose 10 pounds, in doing so you have lowered your cholesterol, gained energy, sleeping better, less moody, no more 3pm sugar cravings, better cardiovascular ability, and so on and so on. Again, have patience with yourself. Keep your head in the game, and keep commitment. There will be trials and tribulations along the way, use these are tools to keep learning.

From January 31st through to April 23rd (12 weeks) you will develop the skills needed to life a healthier, happy life. Keep detailed measurements, not only of your body but also of your exercise and nutrition. If you need help please ASK! I have lots of empty charts or can guide you in the right direction. These are simply tools to keep you on track. Will you be doing this for the rest of your life? No, absolutely not. But in order to begin the lifestyle journey you need to first learn it. Think back to elementary school, we couldn't pick up a pencil for the first time and write a novel. It takes formal training and practice in order to do so.

Did you ever wonder why fad diets don't work? What I am telling you here is what 99.9% of trainers and fitness professionals don't want you to know. In order to succeed in healthy living you must learn and think for yourself.

Phase 3: Inspire- April 23th and beyond. Implementation Phase.

Now for the fun stuff. You have worked hard and you feel great. Not only have you revised your food consumption, but you are as strong as a bull! And you look it too! Your skin is radiant, hair is soft and you are standing taller, literally, from better posture. And maybe along the way you have dropped a few pounds. Let's begin to inspire others. It's your turn now. Show the world the new healthy you. Although I have arranged an option photo shoot for April 23rd (details to follow), the inspire phase is about you using the tool of health to help others.

How? Simple. Your friends and family will see it, and want it. Dinner parties and holidays use good fat, low glycemic and higher protein meals. After dinner activities involve dog walks and not cocktails. The challenge doesn't end on April 23rd, it never ends. Of course you have occasional slip-ups, but baby, that is why this is a lifestyle! It is about a lifelong commitment to yourself.

For those of you looking for an extra push, I have planned a photo shoot for April 23rd. They say a picture is worth a thousand words. And no you don't need to be a fitness model to do one. I like to call them "Show your grandchildren that you were once sexy" photo shoots or "allow yourself to feel like a million bucks" photo shoots. They are fun, you get be an alter-ego self for a few days and step out of reality. Who wouldn't want that! Please email me for more details if you are interested!

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NOTE: This is NOT a sales pitch. I designed the challenge to be done alone, or with my assistance (and varying degrees of that). Let me know if you are interested, even if you want to work through this by yourself, I want to know. My wish is for everyone to challenge themselves to achieve a new self! I want to work with you on an individual basis to help you reach your goals, even if this means simply emailing to check in throughout the time period.

High-Fiber Protein Packed Muffins

Eating healthy never tasted so good. I picked to put this recipe up in this edition because it is a direct reflection of my rants. Being healthy doesn't need to be boring, it simply means remaking traditional recipes to meet healthy living.

These protein packed muffins combine all **three** macronutrients for a well balanced meal. They are not to be eaten in excess or combined with other foods (except veggies), as they literally have everything you need in them. Great for those who are always on the run!

Ingredients

1 1/4 cups protein powder (Whey Isolate)
1 1/4 cups oats
1 tsp baking powder
1/2 tsp baking soda
1/2 tsp cinnamon
1 cup unsweetened applesauce
1/2 cup low-fat milk
1/2 cup Splenda or sugar
2 tbsp olive oil
2 egg whites
1/4 cup blueberries
1/2 cup raspberries

Directions

Combine together the protein powder, oats, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, and Splenda. In another bowl, whisk together unsweetened applesauce, low fat milk, olive oil, and egg whites.

Mix in the dry ingredients until moist. Place into muffin tin, filling until 2/3's full and then bake at 400 degrees F for 15-18 minutes.