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## Hi and welcome to the August 2008 newsletter.

How good were the Olympic games? You couldn't help but get inspired by the effort and the euphoric experience of the athletes winning medals. Those athletes are highly tuned and well conditioned for their sport, we ogle and admire their buffed bodies wishing we could look even half as good as that. Yes, they are finely tuned, not just physically but in all aspects of their health—that is vital to enable peak performance. To achieve peak performance, athletes have to have the right food, get their body functioning properly and most important of all, have the right mind-set.

Too often we look at health one-dimensionally—we see having a great body as being healthy. This not only can be misleading, but also sets up unrealistic beliefs that can lead to unhealthy behaviour. This month we discuss how people often miss what the point of being healthy is really about and try to provide some clarity and guidance on getting all aspects of your health working synergistically to enable you to perform at your peak.

In our usual sections we put the "Spotlight" on Richard Whitehead and ask him those hard-hitting questions on life, we share some common-sense health information and bring you up to date with the latest happenings at McAllister's Fitness. In keeping with the Olympic theme, we hope to inspire you to go for gold with our usual quotes, tips and ideas to help you perform your best.

Enjoy the read!

*Danny*

*At McAllister's we believe that living a healthy lifestyle shouldn't be based on ridiculous fads, restrictive habits and senseless exercise regimes. Our motto is, "It's all about the heart" - have heart for what you do, heart for why you do it and a healthy heart to keep you doing it.*

## Missing the point of being healthy?



Stop obsessing about your weight and the size of your waist and focus on the improvements you have made in other areas of your health, such as how you feel, how you fit into your clothes or how you function, they are the real benefits of being healthy.

You have been training for the last 2–3 months and you feel better than you ever have so you decide to jump on the scales—then all hell breaks loose. The scales lie, they don't tell you what you want to see. Suddenly things aren't the same any more: you feel disappointed, frustrated, cheated, your positive attitude has switched to negative and you start telling yourself that all your efforts aren't really worth it.

You know the scenario—one minute you felt great, then like the flick of a switch, your thinking has changed; what was motivating is now de-motivating. How can the act of standing on the scales completely change a person's thinking and how they feel so quickly? It seems illogical, yet so many people subscribe to the belief that weight is the only true indicator of their progress.

We place so much emphasis on the scales that nothing else we do seems to matter. A few years ago I had a female client who was doing really well; she had never run before and was now running 5 kilometres and fit into clothes she hadn't worn for years—put it this way, she was well happy with herself. She was enjoying life, was proud of what she had achieved and her body language displayed exactly that. Then came the fall. When she arrived at training her eyes were sad, her talk was negative and her whole body language had changed. She was devastated and I thought something major had happened like family problems or a death in the family. To cut the story short, the problem was that she had weighed herself and didn't get the results she was hoping for. I know this is disappointing and plays on your mind, but weight loss isn't the true indicator of progress and until people begin to understand this they will never understand the real meaning of health.

### Why do we do this?

Unrealistic expectations are the main reason this disappointment. Health isn't just about how slim your waist is and what you weigh on the scales, it's about every aspect of you: your fitness, how you function, the way you think, how you control your emotions, and unless you have all these factors working synergistically, you really aren't that healthy. Too often you see fit-looking people who appear to be in control but are emotional wrecks.

They have become obsessed with their physical appearance and have minimal control of their damaging thoughts. We think just because they are in shape, they must be happy and sometimes that is far from the truth. They may look good but are they mentally and physically well?

This type of thinking is one-dimensional, it only deals with the look and disregards

*Weight loss isn't the true indicator of progress and until people begin to understand this they will never understand the real meaning of health.*

how we feel, think and behave. What you weigh on the scales is not who you really are, even if society places a high premium on looking slim (and it does). This message has been internalised through destructive thoughts either from parents, society or your peers and has led you to believe that if you are overweight you're not good enough. Overcoming the self-belief that you are valued less because of your weight adds to the struggle of losing weight. It's a habit that is fully imbedded into your thinking patterns.

You need to change the rules of the "belief" game you have played for so long and start to look at aspects of your health other than weight loss. I'm not suggesting that you shouldn't lose weight, but I want you think about how you feel about yourself. You may still want to lose weight but the process is different. Let's put the actual kilos aside for a moment and look at the different ways you assess your progress and feel about yourself.

### **Looking at the situation differently**

I recently had a client who was disappointed with their lack of weight loss. This person had re-commenced training after a serious illness and their fitness was poor, energy even poorer, strength minimal and their motivation for life was somewhat low. After only eight weeks this person was able to get through a session without gasping for air, progressed from using resistance bands to machine weights for strength training and walked 2 –3 kilometres twice a week; yet, they put all their focus on the scales. Now call me crazy, but this person was laid up in bed for almost two months and was non-functional and is now moving, feeling stronger and improving their fitness—how can they possibly be disappointed? If only they looked at the situation from a different perspective than weight loss, they would see they have made massive improvements with their health. This is a perfect case of missing the point of what being healthy is really about.

This is a vivid example of judging progress by comparing oneself to others. When it comes to our health, we need to work out what it means to us not what the media or others tells us it should be. It is a personal thing and keeping it personal will make it realistic, achievable and enjoyable. - 3 - *(cont.pg 4)*

### **How do we make it personal?**

There are many ways to make it personal, but I will refine it to what I believe are the main three ingredients:

1. Define your purpose - You need to work out why it is important for you to be healthy. It needs to have an emotional attachment to it, something that resonates with you so that you don't get disappointed and give up. Take the example above, the goal was to get stronger and be more functional again—not to have a great body. The real purpose: I don't want to go through that illness again.
2. Be realistic about the outcome – Don't say you want to lose weight if you aren't willing to change, you will only get disappointed. Too often people mistake training to lose weight for training to feel less guilty about their eating. If you are serious about losing weight, then filling out a food diary shouldn't bother you because you will understand it is a major part of the process.
3. Be happy in your own skin – Stop worrying about obtaining the perfect body because most times it isn't going to happen (sorry, but true). Focus on the fundamental things like how well you feel physically, mentally and emotionally; the improvement in your fitness; the extra energy you have; your self-esteem and your enthusiasm for life. Be grateful for these things because they are the true indicators of being healthy.

Being healthy isn't that hard when you look at it from a common-sense perspective, it's a matter of knowing what you realistically want to achieve with your health, being committed to obtaining it and persevering with it, even when things aren't going to plan to make it happen.

The number one reason people aren't healthy is because they never finish what they start. Too often we are looking for monumental changes in minimal time; it's like planting a seed in your garden today and expecting to see a fully-grown tree there tomorrow. It's unrealistic and you're only going to be disappointed.

Getting to the stage where you are unhealthy is usually a gradual process that has developed over years and expecting it to disappear in a few weeks is like hoping for miracles. Instead of hoping for miracles to happen, understand that becoming healthy is a gradual process that isn't just based on weight loss and instant gratification. You need to acknowledge and celebrate your progress along the way no matter how big or small and then keep the momentum going to enable you to achieve a healthy lifestyle forever.

## Spotlight on Richard Whitehead

Richard is a man of wide-ranging interests. He's a true gentleman who knows what he wants, is comfortable with that and approaches life with a positive and professional attitude. Richard sees his exercise as a vital part of obtaining a happy and healthy lifestyle which enables him to pursue his love of the outdoors. Richard is a real testament to what you can achieved when you believe in yourself and are happy with who you are.



### What hobbies, sports or interests do you have?

Bushwalking, Aviculture, Restoration of antiques

### What special feats or accolades have you achieved from training at McAllister's?

I achieved my personal goals of flexibility and fitness.

### Why do you train at McAllister's?

The camaraderie that is evident between trainers and clients.

## 10 Inspirational Questions

### 1. What's your favourite song?

"Hallelujah" – K.D. Lang

### 2. What's your favourite childhood TV show?

Didn't really have one. I spent most of my time playing Lacrosse and football.

### 3. What's your favourite movie?

"Prospero's Books" by Peter Greenaway

### 4. What's your favourite food?

Mostly Italian

### 5. Where's your favourite holiday destination?

Anywhere in Australia

### 6. What is the best piece of advice you have ever received?

Understand what motivates you as an individual

### 7. What's your favourite thing to do on a rainy day?

Walking in the Dandenongs

### 8. What really annoys you?

Insincerity in people

### 9. If you could possess a superpower, what would it be?

Restore the Murray River to full health

### 10. Whom/What inspires you?

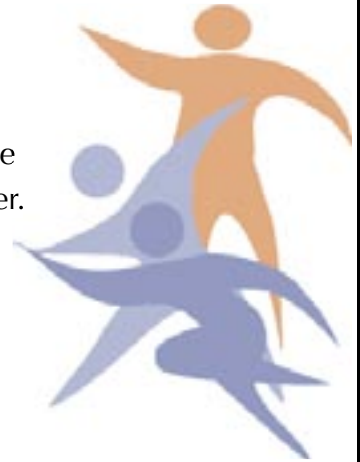
The Dalai Lama and his writings

## What's on

Coming Soon

**"Body confidence for summer" program**

This is an 8-week weight loss program designed for anyone who wants shed the winter kilos and look good for summer. Commencing in mid October 2008



### **Group training sessions**

All sessions are 30 minutes unless otherwise stated.  
The cost is \$12 per session or \$100 for a 10-pack.

### **Pedal "N" Punch**

A dynamic bike and boxing session designed to burn the fat and increase your fitness.

This total body workout will not only burn the calories but will keep you inspired to want more!! Great workout, Great fun!!

### **Express fitness circuits**

An awesome time-efficient fat loss and toning session for all fitness levels. These sessions are designed for anyone who is time poor, wants to get fitter and is keen to lose weight.

### **Alfresco fitness**

A 45-minute outdoor training session (Saturdays only). Aimed to increase your fitness, burn heaps of calories and keep you highly motivated while still having fun!

If you want to be part of the fun, just call us and book your spot.

For more information click [www.mcallistersfitness.com.au/page4.php](http://www.mcallistersfitness.com.au/page4.php)

Or call us on (03) 9877 0572.

## Quote of the month

What some call health, if purchased by perpetual anxiety about diet, isn't much better than tedious disease.

—George Dennison Prentice, Prenticeana, 1860

## Tip of the month

Are you getting your vitamin D?

A study in The Journal of Nutrition and Dietetics has suggested that up to 43% of young women and 23% of the general population are not getting enough vitamin D. It is essential for calcium absorption, and inadequate supplies predispose you to brittle bones that can increase your risk of fractures. UV light from the sun is the best source of vitamin D. To ensure you receive an adequate intake you need to expose the skin for 10 – 15 minutes each day. Today we are receiving less and less vitamin D due to our sedentary lifestyle: we are spending less time outdoors and more and more time indoors. So the point is—still be sun smart, but whenever you get a chance get outside and soak up some rays on a regular basis to top up your vitamin D supplies.

Source: The Journal of Nutrition and Dietetics, December 2006

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