



### *Get Fit!*

Working out at the YMCA is one of my favorite weekly rituals. I try to make it to group fitness classes at least three times a week, more whenever possible. Believe it or not, research suggests that just 3 hours a week can have a significant impact on your overall health and longevity. I always enjoy seeing familiar faces, as well as making new friends. So why do I get so frustrated with all the 'newbies' at the beginning of each New Year?? It never ceases to amaze me how FULL the parking lot gets for the entire month of January. Of course I find it humorous that those of us going to exercise expect to be able to park close to the gym...heaven forbid we would have to walk a long way to get to our workout! And it's no big deal; we all know it is temporary. Reality will set in soon, and those folks who set their resolutions to get fit because they ought to, instead of because they want to, will revert back to old habits when they realize how much work staying fit really is!

Shoulds don't lead to permanent behavior change. I quit smoking cigarettes dozens of times because I knew I should. It wasn't until I committed myself to being a non-smoker that I actually kicked the habit for good. (That was New Years Eve 1983 at the Attic in Greenville, thank you very much). And it had absolutely nothing to do with lack of enjoyment; it was a personal aversion to the habit itself that gave me the willpower to permanently change my behavior. Yes, it really was mind over matter; because it really mattered to me that I preserve my body and my health, even as a young invincible college student.

Our minds need fitness training and healthy habits too. Just as our bodies need a healthy balance of diet and exercise, our minds need a good mix of optimism and opportunity. Because our brains are designed for survival, they tend to focus on what is going wrong. We literally have to retrain our brains to notice what is going right, and to focus on the positive aspects of our lives. It takes practice, but is well worth the investment. Especially considering the Universal Theory of Resonance and the Law of Attraction: what we focus on expands, and we get more of what we are. Those are the factual quantum physics philosophies of how our universe operates. Most of us just learned it as the self-fulfilling prophecy from the Little Engine who could! The belief system and the physical stamina to get up the proverbial hill are two sides of the same coin. And any way you slice it, perception is reality. We create our own lives, with every thought and decision we choose. That is powerful, and scary...a bit daunting for some, and a serious source of energy for others.

I don't watch much TV, but I do enjoy watching The Biggest Loser and American Idol. Why, you ask? Because I enjoy watching people GO for what they really believe in, especially when it is themselves. The transformation along the way is nothing short of stellar, miraculous and profound for most participants. These people literally change,



from the inside out, right before our very eyes! And while ultimately, only one person takes home the title, everyone wins as a result of the experience, even the observers! Both shows, and their victors have become phenomenons, encouraging ordinary people to take extraordinary action, creating their own new reality.

So, go ahead, get fit! But only if you really WANT to, because thinking you should won't do it. And stick to it, or stay out of my parking space!

Gail is a facilitator, speaker, author and coach as well as a consistent contributor to the Pender Post. She enjoys helping people define and achieve success on their own terms. . Please contact her at [GailO@GailO.com](mailto:GailO@GailO.com) for a complimentary coaching session.