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Get Fit, Stay Fit, and Have Fun Doing It™



FITHEADS® CHANGES THE WAY YOU THINK ABOUT FITNESS

Written by Ford Brooks, Ed.D.

Over the past 20 years, according to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), there has been a dramatic increase in obesity in the United States. In 2007, only one state (Colorado) had a prevalence of obesity less than 20 percent. Thirty other states, however, had a prevalence equal to or greater than 25 percent, and three of these states (Alabama, Mississippi, and Tennessee) had a prevalence of obesity equal to or greater than 30 percent. For the millions of Americans who may meet the criteria for obesity or who just want to begin a program of activity and wellness, the FitHeads® System is for you.

As a professor of Counseling at Shippensburg University in Pennsylvania, I've spent most of my clinical career working with issues of addiction, relapse prevention, wellness, and motivation. The FitHeads System incorporates what I've found most useful in helping clients to make small changes, prevent relapse, and develop motivation. FitHeads is an approach unique to wellness and fitness in that it incorporates meditation, cognitive-behavioral approaches, as well as addressing the spirit of the individual. The FitHeads System slowly introduces change possibilities and provides myriad approaches to support those changes (i.e., DVD, CD, fridge magnet, action strategies, web-based information).

A significant difference from other programs is in the approach; wellness and fitness is fun and enjoyable versus tedious and painful. This System introduces a new approach to life that begins with new thinking ("I do have control.") which then commutes to new behavior ("I just walked 10,000 steps today!") and a rejuvenated spirit ("I feel good about who I am.") As the DVD presents, a passion and desire for change is at the core. By the time individuals are watching the FitHeads DVD, they have come to a point in their lives that something needs to change. The FitHeads System then, for ten days, supports, greets, and honors that desire for change. Too many "fitness" programs start too quick, ask too much of the participant, and many times focus on weight loss as an initial goal. The FitHeads approach is realistic and energizing. The ten day structure is a basis for a lifetime of wellness and joy. Rather than having weeks and months of schedules and charts, the FitHeads System helps to facilitate a base for wellness which can be incorporated into daily living.

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The concept of “Fit Head” takes ideology from Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) where a change in thinking can lead to a change in emotion and behavior. This program helps create a “fit head” so that other aspects of the individual can change. CBT is a psychotherapeutic approach that aims to influence problematic and dysfunctional thoughts, emotions, and behaviors through goal-oriented, systematic procedures. In essence, the FitHeads System utilizes many aspects of this approach as a basis for change. As seen in the DVD, CD, and booklet, the goal of 10,000 steps per day focuses on steps rather than weight loss. Although weight loss is a wonderful result, the initial focus is on developing a healthy mind, awakening the emotions, and taking small active steps. The use of the pedometer is an ingenious tool to make the 10,000 steps a reality and along the way make getting active fun (which only breeds enthusiasm and more activity)!

A significant aspect to the FitHeads approach is a meditative awareness – awareness of self (thoughts/emotions/spirit), the relationship with food, and the surrounding environment. By helping participants “awaken” to their own lives and those around them, healthier choices can occur. A section earlier in the DVD shows two paths in the woods where choices on one path can lead to death and disease while the choices on the other path can lead to health and wellness. The introduction of these paths early in the FitHeads System helps to build and redefine for each individual what it means to live a healthy and invigorating life.

In addition to being a professor, I am a runner who started participating in marathons over 24 years ago while I was in graduate school. At the time I was a half a pack per day smoker and wasn't too concerned with eating or living well. One morning as I looked out my apartment window, I saw hundreds of people running in the rain. I thought to myself, “Those folks are nuts.” Over two years later I ran that marathon and haven't stopped.

Although the FitHeads System was not developed, I followed many of the aspects noted in their program: starting slow (I walked a block, then two, then three, etc.), having a short goal (running five blocks without stopping), reviewing my lifestyle and what I put into my body (from ice cream at night to salads at dinner), and utilizing a book to record my efforts and how I felt about each day's exercise. For whatever reasons after that Sunday morning, I decided to take action as many of you reading this will do. I wish I had the FitHeads System back then because it would have helped me be gentler with my efforts, it would have given me concrete tips to

aid my change process, and it would have helped me feel part of a greater community of others trying to make healthier lifestyle choices.

The creators of the FitHeads System have done their homework and created a process that is life altering. In today's world with so much stress, change, and uncertainty, our well being and spirit is in jeopardy. The small steps are the big steps and the FitHeads System will help you get there.

For more information about FitHeads, go to www.FitHeads.com.

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Dr. Brooks earned a bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Richmond and a Masters in Science from Virginia Commonwealth University-Medical College of Virginia. He completed his doctoral studies at The College of William and Mary earning an Ed.D. in Agency and Community Counseling.