

Losing your resolve? Fitness Connexion can help!

By Julie Workman

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You started with the best intentions. January 2nd, you threw out all the leftover holiday treats, bought a new pair of running shoes, some workout clothes and a membership at the gym.

You were committed and really meant it this time. No more candy. Hit the gym on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. Made friends with your brand-new personal trainer.

Yet here you are, six weeks later, down ten pounds (but you wanted 20!) and lucky to get to the gym once a week. Your personal trainer has forgotten your name because you haven't had time for him since January 20th, and somehow, a bag of M&Ms has taken up residence in the drawer of your desk.

Don't despair! "It's never too late to get back on track," says Dafne Greene, a world-class athlete and the owner of Fitness Connexion. "We're here to help, and we have seen some amazing success stories. Our gym is designed for women, by women, and we offer not only the very best in training but a comfortable atmosphere with equipment and classes that deliver sustainable motivation for our members."

"I started training when I was five years old and practically grew up in a gym. I can't imagine my life without exercise, and it's my passion to share that philosophy with everyone," says Greene. "I know that not everyone sees exercise – intentionally training your body to look and feel the way you want it to – the same way I do, but committing to a training program can only change your life for the better, and I opened Fitness Connexion to bring that message to our community."

Greene's story is an interesting one and gives her a unique perspective on the role of physical fitness as an essential part of both personal and professional success.

Dafne grew up as part of a traditional Greek family - in Mexico City, Mexico. She started training as a gymnast when she was five years old, and her first job was as a gymnastics coach at age 16. The highlight of her gymnastics career was the three months she spent training with the Russian national team, specializing in injury prevention. She went to college in Cancun, Mexico and earned a bachelor's degree, then a master's degree in hotel administration. She also has a degree in exercise science and a master's degree in business administration. She speaks fluent Greek, Spanish, and English and became an American citizen in 2014.

She's lived and worked in Mexico City, Cancun, Las Vegas, and now, Bloomington, Illinois.

This eclectic and international background in business (and life!) gives Dafne a unique perspective on running the Fitness Connexion, which she's owned for the past six years.

"It's not about having the latest equipment. It's not about being super fit or super skinny. At Fitness Connexion, it's about making exercise part of your life. You get up, take a shower, go to work, go to the gym, go home. Exercise has to be part of your life like all those other things, or you'll never see it as something fun – and our gym is fun!"

"Our members train based on the latest research in body movement techniques and on the four bases of fitness: balance, core, flexibility, and strength. I am certified to teach all 9 of the Mossa Group Classes, including Core, Kick, Groove and Power. We have a boot camp, too, and a personal trainer, Nicolette Isaacs, on staff."

"I believe in continuing education, no matter what field you're working in, but it's especially important in the fitness industry because we don't want anyone to get hurt while they're working out with us," Greene continues. "There are some gyms where staff gets hired, goes through a three-day training program, and then market themselves as a personal trainer, but that will never happen at Fitness Connexion. Our staff all have degrees in kinesiology or some kind of exercise science, and we work continually to earn the latest certifications for all the programs that we offer."

"Our rates are about the same as at other comparable facilities, but we offer some unique features you won't find anywhere else. Instead of a seven-day free trial membership (the industry standard), we offer a 16-day trial. If a prospective member comes to at least six group classes during those 16 days, we waive the enrollment fee when they decide to join us. It's much more important to me that our members take that time to create a habit and get results than it is that I collect their enrollment fee. The most important thing is to get moving. And this is an easy habit to sustain with us because unlimited group classes are included with our monthly membership."

"Sometimes it's frustrating for me when people don't see the value in investing in their own physical fitness, so I ask them: 'Would you rather pay a membership fee at a gym or pay for blood pressure medicine?' Because that's what it comes down to! For \$1.50 per day – the price of a cup of coffee – you could change your life by improving your health and fitness levels and creating a whole new sense of well-being!"

Given her life-long love of fitness, Dafne makes it a point to get involved with community organizations like the Girl Scouts, going so far as to design special classes for them at the gym so that they can earn their fitness badges.

"It's important to be connected to the community you serve," Greene says. "Working with the Girl Scouts is important to me because it not only demonstrates the importance of being fit and healthy; it also gives the girls a chance to see a successful businesswoman at work."

"I've been very lucky in so many ways, and there was always someone there to help me when I needed it, so I try to do the same. My mother had cancer. I understand the stress that can put on not only the patients, but their families, so we do what we can to support the Community Cancer Center and Relay for Life. At home, our dogs give us nothing but loyalty and love – all the dogs should have a chance to find a forever home – so we help the animal rescue organizations, too."

Fitness Connexion, for Women, by Women, is open 5 am-Noon and 3:30-7 pm Monday through Friday, 7-11 am on Saturdays and 1-3:30 pm on Sundays. Fitness Connexion is, by design, a gym 'for women, by women,' but it's important for men to stay healthy and fit, too. So, in keeping with our goal to help everyone achieve wellness through exercise, men actually **can** get personal training at Fitness Connexion, too – but it's unadvertised and only available by appointment while the gym is closed between noon and 3:30 on weekdays.

Greene continues: "There are over 30,000 gyms, fitness centers and training facilities in the United States today – from giant chains with hundreds of locations to specialty gyms like Fitness Connexion. The most important thing for everyone is to get moving to improve your

overall health and wellness. With all those choices, take advantage of the free trial at each gym until you find one you like that offers the classes and features that you want. And then go get moving!”

So break out those new running shoes and workout clothes and make 2015 the last year that you have to resolve to lose weight and get fit. Let Dafne and the dedicated women at Fitness Connexion help you make fitness your way of life. It will be fun. We promise!

Fitness Connexion is a gym for Women, by Women, located at 3302 Gerig Drive in Bloomington. Owner Dafne Greene invites you to come in for a complimentary tour of the facility, and a free 16-day trial membership. You can reach Fitness Connexion at 309.663.6100 or info@fitnessconnexion.net.