Be Well Aware – Health Article

Health over Fitness (Defining What Health Looks Like)

Defining Health: the Dictionary Definition

The word "health" is everywhere we look. At the grocery store and on food labels, plastered across the gym, on pamphlets at the doctor's office, and in emails at our workplace. We drive by billboards on the highway centered around healthcare, we see it advertised in TV commercials, and nowadays it's plastered across social media and news articles. The word is often used very loosely and may focus solely on fitness, so sometimes we tend to lose sight of what "health" really means.

There are many definitions of health, however the World Health Organization (WHO)'s definition is mostly referred to. WHO defines health as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity". While this is an all-encompassing explanation, it is very important to develop an understanding and lay out our own visions of what health means to us. Since the definition may be highly individual, so will our goals and the steps we take to reach them.

Health over Fitness

Before spelling out your own personal vision of health, consider what aspects you want to include.

When we paint a picture of "health" in our minds, we might imagine ourselves at the gym working out and eating a strict diet of chicken, broccoli, and rice. A common misconception in our modern-day culture is that fitness determines our health, when in reality, our health is *so much more* than just our fitness level. Sure, physical health plays a big role in our overall well-being, but having a multi-faceted view will help you strive for balance in all areas of your life and overall health. Without positive and empowering thoughts toward yourself and your life (mental health), and checking in on relationships with your friends, family, and co-workers (social health) you may still feel out of balance.

Corporate Fitness Works

Defining Health: Your Definition

Being healthy looks different for different people. When you're healthy, you will feel well physically, mentally, and socially. You will feel balanced. You will radiate positivity. Being healthy means *feeling* your best. It's not necessarily about how you look, despite what society tells us. Just because someone looks "healthy" doesn't mean they are taking all of the necessary steps to take care of and further their holistic health and well-being.

The best way to maintain your health is to preserve it through a nourishing lifestyle rather than waiting until sickness occurs. It's important to find a balance of caring for your body AND your mind as a whole, and doing it in a way that works for you. When trying to figure out your own personal definition of health and what it means in your life, think about the following:

- What makes you feel the best?

- What makes you the happiest?

- What fuels your body in a powerful way?

- What drives you to want to be better than you were the day before?

Peak health is highly individual. Maintaining wellness and optimal health is a life-long, daily commitment. The steps you take to care for your health and well-being may change throughout different stages of your life. By identifying and continuing to prioritize the fundamental areas of your health, you can ensure that you continue to feel your greatest. While it may not be possible to avoid disease altogether, we can develop resilience and prepare our bodies and our minds to deal with illnesses or ailments as they arise.

References:
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