

Health

Getting fit with Steve Black

By Elizabeth Wood
Reminder Editor

The first thing that you notice about Steve Black is that he is interested in his clients, quietly competent and exudes patience.

It's also apparent that Black loves his work which includes injury resolution, sport specific programs and – the reason that I am in his office – weight management.

It's a good thing that Black possesses all of the above qualities – especially the patience – because he is going to have his work cut out for him when it comes to setting up a program for me.

Frankly, I don't have the heart to tell him this so early in the consultation so I keep uncharacteristically silent as he outlines the program. I'd rather not scare him so early in the consultation.

Black, the owner of Rocky Mountain Human Performance Center, has recently moved his office to 1111 Elm St. in West Springfield and his business deals with general fitness programs, sports training and weight management programs.

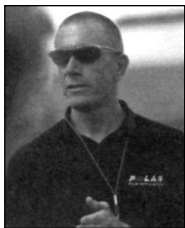
Black's office is open and bright with 1,100 square feet and there is a peaceful air to the office that is apparent at first glance. Combine that with Black's easy-going demeanor and it's easy to see how clients are immediately put at ease.

First, let me say that I have severe misgivings about this whole program; I have been putting it off as long as I can. Anyone who knows me understands that I am not athletically inclined in the least, hate tests and fear the treadmill.

But the amazing thing about Black is that he not only allays the average person's misgivings – in this case, mine – but he explains that losing weight and shaping up can actually be accomplished scientifically with the desired results if individuals adhere to the program.

"An individual's program centers on an eat-to-lose premise," Black explained to me as we sat down for my initial consultation. "We don't starve people; we tailor our program to their likes and needs."

I feel somewhat better upon hearing this news. I love chocolate, for instance, and don't understand



Steve Black

why it isn't a major food group.

"I hear that sentiment voiced frequently," observed Black with a smile as he prepared to work up my medical history.

"No one really does a one-on-one program [like this]," Black continued. "It's pretty unique; no one really offers a customized program. I can keep the cost reasonable and offer a high quality service at a reasonable price for athletes and non-athletes alike."

He can also determine the proper exercise intensity, duration and recovery as well as improve cardiovascular fitness along the way.

Black begins his client programs by asking individuals what their specific health goals are and then progresses quietly to taking some measurements. In my case, I am interested in losing additional weight and keeping it off.

"Every body is different," Black adds as we head for the treadmill in a room off the main office. "It's the resting metabolic rate that determines whether an individual's weight loss goal is realistic. A person's activity level affects that resting metabolic rate."

Black's clients in the weight management program meet once a week for the first six weeks at which time they review a food journal that they are asked to keep between visits. They will also weight in with him and undergo a support session during these visits.

"It's the psychological dynamic that is lacking in diet books," Black observed.

Black's business also includes weight management programs for children as well as a combined program for parents and children

which, in many cases, fosters a family dynamic according to Black. These types of programs are gaining in popularity as childhood obesity increases in today's society.

Black also noted that 20% of his practice comes from tutorial programs for student athletes and that figure is growing on a daily basis.

"In many cases," Black observed, "a student wants to get faster for football or a Division I lacrosse player wants to drop 15 lbs. and gain some muscle mass for the fall. With a personalized program, we can address those athletic goals."

Black explains the various aspects of his work in the same manner that he prepares me for my initial assessment; quietly and patiently. It's obvious that he enjoys his work and there's absolutely no doubt on his part as to the ultimate results.

It is Black's quiet confidence throughout the assessment that convinces me that it might be possible to not only lose the weight but keep it off as well.

In the end, time will tell but for the present, I am quite pleased that I didn't collapse on the treadmill. Life is full of small victories.

–Steve Black can be reached at 413-739-2700 and he'll be happy to answer any questions that you might have. Heaven knows he patiently answered all of my questions and there were hundreds of them. And if I can survive the treadmill and live to tell about it, so can you. Give him a call.