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# How FXB Has Changed My Life

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## **OVERVIEW**

My story is hardly unique. Reductively-speaking; guy gets fat, guy joins gym, guy loses 100+ pounds. Ten seconds and an Internet connection will show just how common this story is. In fact, considering how many of us folks are in this \$10k challenge, I guess one doesn't even need an Internet connection, but only to look around the gym at any given classtime. But here's the thing: while the broad strokes of my story may not be unique, my life is, and FXB has forever changed it. And not only mine, but my family's lives as well.

## **HOW I GOT THERE**

I became a father at 36, and my 2nd son arrived two years later. At this point, my life had slid away from me. Instead of doing what I wanted whenever I wanted, I now was getting up at the crack of whenever the babies decided I was, driving to daycare, fighting a long commute where I'd nab a bag of McNasty on my drive to work, leaving work for the long commute back to daycare where I'd indulge in a snack and a soda, then struggling though dinnertime and into the evening just trying to keep up with life. I was exhausted by the time i got them into bed and often I could be found slumped in front of the television with a bag of junk food, enjoying a bit of Me Time. I just kind of stopped paying attention.

Flash forward a couple years and all that not paying attention paid off. I was 340lbs. My attitude had soured. I was quick to anger, and my tongue had become razor-sharp. Anytime I stood up my knees and hips ached. As a result I'd developed a slight limp. I'd also turned off my friends and co-workers with my nasty attitude, and I found that I'd lost friends, social status, and confidence from co-workers. Not to mention what my poor wife must have been thinking... I was having a crappy time, and made sure everyone else did too.

## **MY CHANGE-POINT**

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It started simple-enough. I a silly little idea really. I looked down the road two years and realized that my destiny would be to be the Fat Dad. You know what that is, right? Every kid's class has one. The dad who tries to be supportive and shows up, but is so huge that the other little kids point and say something.

While I could survive them saying something to me, I was also keenly aware that I wouldn't be the one the kids would actually tease. It would be my kids.

What kind of father, I wondered, would be the kind who creates a situation where his kids are the victims of his lethargy?

That led me to start asking myself a ton of questions. I questioned what kind of husband/co-worker/boss I was. And all of those questions rolled up into the big one: what kind of man was I?

It was time to find out.

## **LOOK TO THE PAST TO FIND THE PRESENT**

I was never much of an athlete growing up, but when my parents enrolled me in taekwondo at 12 years old, I took to it like a duck to water.

Three years in, I'd earned a black belt. More importantly, I'd found confidence.

In high school I tried my hand at various sports. Cross country running one year, football another year. Neither was for me, but both provided the foundational building blocks of running (mile time was 6:30) and of lifting weights (my squat game was on-point).

After college, I'd gone back to a new taekwondo school to peel off some pounds. I started back at white belt, but worked my way right back up that ladder. The belts got darker and my weight improved. Unfortunately with starting my grown-up life I had some job changes and some moving around and let it go again.

In looking for an alternative ( I didn't want to start over for a 3rd time), I found Bill Phillips's book/DVD called *Body for Life*. He laid out the need for cardio, weight training and nutrition, the latter being a component that I was aware of, but found wasn't as necessary when I was young. I could eat two meatball subs for lunch and not gain a pound back then, and any time I considered weight loss, that remained my mental model. But I digress...

His program combined all three elements, and he challenged people to join up. For the Body For Life challenge, he offered up his own Lamborghini as the grand prize. Unfortunately there was no classes or accountability tied to it, so I didn't find my success there.

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All of these elements were in my head when i had my change-point and went looking for the right program.

## **TODAY**

I don't think I need to dwell on what the FXB program is, except to say that it aligned perfectly with what I've found I responded to my whole life. It had the kicking of taekwondo, the weight training of football, the running of cross country. It also offered things I hadn't tried before: nutrition. Group classes. Accountability.

I think for a lot of folks, it's those last two that are missing.

During my 10-week session, I went on a family trip for a week. I didn't think to alert my gym owner, because who does that, you know? But she knew. I caught an email from her asking about me. That was different and unexpected and most of all welcome. "I'll be there Monday!" was my reply. And I was.

In retrospect I appreciated that email more than I realized. And I was determined to not have to make her email me again.

I started working with my wife on our calendar to ensure that I could make it to a class. If she/we had an evening event, I would go to an alternate classtime. Pretty soon I was a 6-day-a-week guy.

The end of that session saw me come out as a Top 3 finisher for the \$1000 prize. That's when I decided to stick with it.

My time on the mile run was an embarrassing 16 minutes at my test-in; something that 16 year old me would have not thought possible. I started coming to the gym earlier to work on my time. I began adding a 2nd and 3rd mile to vary the training. I started running hills and sprints.

I've taken every FIT challenge offered up.

I track every single meal using My Fitness Pal, and I keep my calories to 1800 a day.

I'm paying attention.

## **A Bonus**

After the success of my 10 week session, my wife decided to join FXB as well. Different location, but her results are just as impressive, if not moreso. She won her gym's \$1000 session prize. She's become a coach, joined the \$10k challenge for next year and is as committed as I am. She and I are in this together, and that's been wonderful for our marriage.

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## CONCLUSION

There are a ton of things I could ramble on about. I won't now, but rather I'd like to go back to my change-point: those two boys of mine. Because there was a moment with them that I recall clear as a bell, and when I do it sometimes causes me to well up a bit. A moment that really encapsulates how FXB has changed my life.

One random Saturday my wife decided to join me at the Shoreview gym for a kickboxing class. We took the boys with us. While they played in the kids' area, she and I picked a bag near them and went to work. We would occasionally look over to make sure they were being good, and after 3 or 4 times, that's when I saw it: those two were laying on their stomachs, China in their hands. They were watching. Not horsing around, not watching YouTube or playing with the toys. They were simply watching their dad and mom trading roundkicks and sweating their asses off.

It is said that with kids, more is caught than taught.

They were catching our example that day.

HOW has my life been changed by FXB? The before and after pics speak for themselves in terms of physical transformation. In addition, my joints don't ache when I get out of a chair. My attitude isn't sour and nasty. I'm no longer out of breath mowing the lawn or going up a flight of stairs. Meals are planned and prepped beforehand so I'm not going out to lunch all the time at work. Most importantly, my marriage is better. My wife has joined me and we're doing this together. My boys understand what is going on, and I'm modelling good life-behavior for them.

Most importantly, now I'm paying attention.

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Thank you to Lance Farrell, Kerrie Robbins, Cindi Nikituk, Liz Hinz, the whole 5:30pm crew at Shoreview, and most of all thank you to my wife Angelique for being the best partner a guy could ever ask for. Time to set new goals for 2018!