

## THE IMPORTANCE OF FUNCTIONAL FITNESS

By Morné Swanepoel

“It is essential that you follow a scientifically developed training program which aids in developing explosive muscle tissue to perform at high intensity levels and muscle tissue that endures under extreme stress situations.”

It is important to develop an explosive muscle that will endure and work under resistance and not just develop a good looking muscle. This type of training is not “bodybuilding” designed to get you “ripped”. Yes, you will get stronger and more muscular.

Your body will also get more leaner. But the primary purpose of your conditioning training program is the development of functional fitness. This means strength, endurance and flexibility development. Most bodybuilders do not have functional, athletic muscles. Their muscles are tight, stiff and cramped developed to protrude. Most bodybuilders do not have much for endurance either nor are they very strong when it comes to a functional muscle.

## THE CONSTITUENCY OF MUSCLES

Muscles are made up of fibres. Each muscle works by contracting its individual fibres; this shortens the muscle and moves the joint on which it acts. Muscles are made up of two types of fibre known as fast and slow twitch fibres. The faster twitch fibres you have the better your ability for explosive bursts of activity, the slower twitch fibres you have the better your capacity for endurance exercise. There is no way of telling which type predominates without removing muscle tissue. (Biopsy)

Developing a functional muscle will include training with alive resistance i.e. against an opponent fighting back and isometric resistance training which is the best way to build strength and develop stamina, increase your fitness levels taking your endurance levels to new heights.

Resistance/conditioning exercises are for people who are healthy. They can be done by men and women. Children can do them too as well as people in their 40's, 50's and over as long as their health is good and they have no orthopedic problems. Beginner students start with very light resistance and will progressively add more resistance over time as their bodies and skills develop.

The duration of a training session is an average of 60–90 minutes long. The training is divided so that the training session commences with some warm-up and stretching exercises together with conditioning exercises such as “Hindu Squats”, “Hindu Push-ups” and Bridges.

Warming up and cooling down should be an integral part of your fitness training routine. A few minutes of skipping is highly recommended. Use an exercise routine to warm up your joints. Joints are vulnerable because muscles, tendons and ligaments attach there. Along with the slow warm-up movements, add movements that will ease and lubricate the joints into action. Cold muscles are much more likely to be injured, to warm up use the swing through, body twists, body circles, etc which put the big muscle groups through a variety of motions.

The following is the types of cardio training you will expose your body to during your fitness routine:

#### 1. Aerobic/Cardio Training

The purpose of aerobic/cardio training is to improve the efficiency of the oxygen delivery system and the efficiency with which the muscles produce energy. The benefits gained from aerobic/cardio training are enormous and include weight loss, increased life expectancy and an enhanced feeling of well-being.

To improve your level of aerobic/cardio fitness you should gradually exercise for longer periods of time and maintain a steady increase in the intensity of exercise. (Progressive Resistance) The best way to make exercise more intense is to cover a given distance over shorter periods of time or to “handicap” yourself by wearing wrist or ankle weights while you perform the exercise.

#### 2. Anaerobic Exertion

This exercise is of high intensity and usually brief duration, as in sprinting. It tends to foster mere muscle development.

#### 3. Isometric Exertion

Muscles are made to work against a static resistance so that they expend energy but do not produce movement. An example is pressing your hands palm-to-palm. This builds up muscle strength.

#### 4. Isotonic Exertion

Working muscles in a particular part of the body contract at varying speeds against a constant resistance. Lifting weights and sit-ups are both examples of this.

#### 5. Isokinetic Exertion

Exercise in which muscles contract at constant speed against varying degrees of resistance.

The time required to achieve functional fitness depends on the amount of training time you put in every week. You need to be committed to improving your health and to stick to the scheduled classes. As your condition improves, you need to push yourself harder, not less. The more you put into your training, the more benefits you will receive. Many people often astonishingly say that they want to first get fit before they start training, then you’ll be waiting forever. The main thing is that you BEGIN. To achieve functional fitness your training routine will include a cardio workout and resistance training (combat conditioning) for muscle development and toning. To cool down, reduce the exercise you are doing to a slow pace.

Morné Swanepoel’s JKD High Performance Street Fighting offers the chance for students to learn to defend him/herself in a street situation using realistic and functional training methods to ensure the development of a healthy body with High Performance orientated muscle toning i.e. endurance and explosion.

#### GUIDING PRINCIPLES AT OUR GYMS

- Mental growth and stability. Positive thinking and a great attitude towards life and training is an important mind set we encourage.
- International standards in our recognition and coaching.

- Correct use of nutritional supplements to ensure peak performance.
- A healthy diet and sufficient nutritional intake.
- Healthy sleeping patterns.
- Physical training routine to ensure the development of a healthy body with High Performance orientated muscle toning i.e. endurance and explosion.

The “Quick Start” curriculum hits all of the ranges and range transitions (moving from the kickboxing range into the clinch and down onto the ground), while prioritizing offence and defence for the most common street attacks. This sets the tone for the rest of the JKD HPSF (High Performance Street Fighting) curriculum. The student receives a working understanding of the entire scope of self defence, while developing a strong foundation for further JKD HPSF training. We have people start playing Performance games in the very first class, along with getting started with the most basic techniques to use in each range. The classes are vibey, filled with music used to motivate the student to push their training to their limits. We have training opportunity groups world wide and if you can not get to one of our studios for training, we can bring the training to you through our highly sophisticated long distance training program.