



FEMME FATALE *Physique*

Everybody's a Personal Trainer...

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It seems everybody's a personal trainer and a nutritionist nowadays. Sure, they wear nice attire, look fit and can probably stand on a balance ball while doing a shoulder press; but are they legitimate? It's a job title that's being thrown around so loosely nowadays. Unfortunately, for the unknowing and unsuspecting, there are too many half-ass personal trainers and nutritionists. Even some of the "top-notch" personal trainers don't know their ass from their elbow (literally, they really don't know their anatomy and physiology beyond the words "muscle" and "fat"). Not to mention the diets they're writing may be quite generic and cookie-cutter-ish.

So who do you turn to, your boyfriend? That cute guy in the gym? He has a nice body, let me ask him! Maybe he can clean your teeth too, he has a great smile too, huh? Would you trust a dentist cleaning your mouth that didn't go to dental school? The scary thing is that just about anyone can obtain a personal training certificate, most six year olds and chimpanzees can pass most general level personal training exams.

The great thing about a wide array of personal trainer availability and the various populations to be trained is that there isn't a single right way to train. As long as you know why you're doing something with a foundational theory for application, your training method probably isn't too far-fetched. With many ideal and logical methods of training, however, are many idiotic and pointless ways as well. The general public can't necessarily differentiate between that unless they do their own personal research. There are some great trainers out there that can make anyone lose weight and attain the body they've been looking for, just pick and choose wisely. Don't settle with what you're not sure about. I would also stray away from the trainers that have you standing on a balance disk or unstable surface when performing your exercise, unless you are seeking a job in the circus. It's a great sales gimmick, looks fun, but it's not the most efficient. Keep your weight training and balance training separate, trust me, the motor neurons in your brain will fire more efficiently when its assumed its kinesthetic awareness (when we overload specific body parts [i.e. lifting a weight] we need our balance in tact). While I'm on the topic of gimmick trainers, stray away from trainers that only use *one* method of training (i.e. kettlebells, bands, balls, vibration platforms). Those are all vital implements but they are all tools in the toolbox, use them all throughout various phases (groups of weeks) of your workout.

Don't ever be afraid to ask your trainer about his/her educational/experience background. If you are among a special population (i.e. athlete, elderly, injured/post-injury/chronic injury,

cardiovascular impairments, metabolic syndrome, pregnant, special work fields that require specific pre-rehabilitation [to prevent common injuries, essential for athletes too]) I highly suggest you seek a *Strength and Conditioning Specialist*, that is someone with a CSCS title from the *National Strength & Conditioning Association* (NSCA). Another NSCA certification to look for is the Certified Personal Trainer (NSCA-CPT) title. I love NSCA; they surpass *all* other organizations for certification. If they have a bachelor's degree in exercise physiology/kinesiology that's ideal too! A chimpanzee can't pass the [CSCS or NSCA-CPT] test or get his bachelor's in exercise physiology, so your NSCA certified/exercise science professional should have a pretty good idea of how to work with your body around your specialized needs. It requires a lot more than a weekend course or certification book reading to becoming educationally well rounded in this field. I wouldn't trust my body in the wrong hands. I can't tell you how many times I've witnessed careless training; get yourself in the right hands of someone who has invested substantial time researching this field with respective application.

For information on NSCA's certification tests:

<http://www.nsca-cc.org/>