

## The Kumon™ Approach to Fitness

By Karen McCoy

Last week, my son started working with Kumon™, a special educational program that helps children improve their math skills.

During the orientation session, the instructor went over the principals of the system, and how this system has led to success for thousands of children over the years. Their secret – ensuring both parent and child understand and apply an unwavering commitment to consist homework. The instructor explained that children are expected to do their math homework through vacations, weekends and holidays, and that the success of the program, and each child, was based on the groups' philosophy of consistency of work.

It was this philosophy that got my attention and respect. It is the same approach I take with all my clients – I teach each client about the importance of consistency in their workout programs and diet plans. In fact, I've given the same lecture to hundreds of clients over the years, and the successful clients were those that adopted the '*consistency is key*' approach to training and eating.



In order to be successful, your training, like Kumon™, cannot be viewed as the exception to the rule, rather, *it must become the rule*, with everything else scheduled around it. If you have a hair appointment, re-schedule it. If there's a dentist appointment to make, schedule it around your training. If you have a doctor's appointment - same thing. That's why a set training schedule is so important – you automatically know the times and days you train, so you can easily say no to events that would cause you to give up that time. Don't barter with your training. Make it stick.

In other words, the success of any fitness regime is *making it a lifestyle*, where you work through holidays and special events as you would other lifestyle habits. You would never give up your daily shower or forget to brush your teeth during the holidays, so why give up your training? (I'm more lenient with eating, but not much!).

I learned this point early on in my training career. To make sure I would train regularly, my training became *my first priority*, with everything else scheduled around it. At the beginning of each week, I would pencil in my training times in my Daytimer, without fail. If clients or friends wanted to meet me in that time-slot, I politely told them that I had a previous appointment. (I didn't tell people that appointment was with myself: it's amazing how many people view this as selfish or odd, so I quickly learned not to explain myself).

I still follow this practice today: at the beginning of every week, I block out my training times in my Daytimer, and all other appointments get scheduled around these times. No exceptions. It's the only way I can remain consistent in my training, day after day, year after year. And it works! It's been 27 years, and I hardly ever miss a training day.

Try it. At the beginning of every week, pencil in your training appointments with yourself. Don't tell anyone, just do it. Do it for you. You'll be rewarded with years of superb health, built on a daily practice of commitment and consistency, resulting in the slow, steady progress necessary to shape and tone your body into an amazing work of art!