



McCOY
FITNESS & HEALTH

12-Week Best Shape of Your Life Challenge

PHASE Four:

Week 12—The Party's Over...Now What?

When, what, how, where...?

~Keeping it fresh and on-going...~



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Personal Message from Karen

I just gotta say, I don't know about you but I had a ton of fun!

Over these last 3 months, you've don a TON of work...I don't know of any other program quite like this, and I honestly wish this kind of program was around when I wanted to get in shape and learn, really learn, the ins and outs of training, eating and living healthy!



At this point, I need to pass the torch on to you...but how do we do this?

You have several options....

- 1. You can stay with the Warrior Woman E-Workouts** as many of you have come to know them, as you were before.
- 2. You can do the Challenge again...**I've had many women do it 2 times or more, or once a year just to get back on course. A great way to get back on track and stay motivated!
3. You can try my [Power-UP! one on one Coaching Program](#), or
- 4. You can say good-bye**, it's been fun and see you around some time!

Whatever you choose, don't let go of your momentum, ok? It's been hard-won to get it to this point, and if you lose it, it takes a long time to get back up to speed (why do you think I rarely take time off? Rarely do I even take time off of training while on holidays).

Stay motivated by going to the gym, reading your Oxygen, Fitness RX, Women's Health or Inside Fitness mags...all great motivators, and surf the net to watch how competitors and those in training stay in shape...I have my favourites. Who are yours?

Refer to your **TRACKING SHEET** which covers everything we've learned in our 12 weeks together...post it to your fridge or pull it out when you get off track.

Thanks again. It's been an amazing journey, and thank you for letting me share it with you!

Ever Thought of Doing a Contest?

It's becoming more popular these days...women all over are getting into training at such a level that they are considering competing....are you one of them?

If that's the case, then the [Power-UP! Program](#) is for you....I can keep you up on what contests are coming up, posing, training, and more (this does not include one on one coaching).

In the meantime, here's a great article on the difference in contests and contest prep. Remember this is for the US, and Canada varies slightly (we're not as developed as they are, to start), but it'll give you an idea on where to point your efforts!

When you make a decision to compete, how do you know what class you belong in? With Bodybuilding, Physique, Fitness, Figure and Bikini there are a lot to choose from, and many times girls choose wrong.

Bodybuilding: Very muscular, extremely lean with good symmetry. The words "striated glutes" belong here. As I hope we all know there are a huge difference between a local level female bodybuilder and a Pro; obviously the higher up in the sport a female bodybuilder climbs the more hardcore and bigger she needs to get. Eventually, this includes making a decision on what she is willing to do to reach her goals. Let's not forget that there are athletes in this sport that are totally natural, and just because a woman has more than average amount of muscle and low body fat does not mean she's taking steroids. It could be as easy as genetics, discipline, dedication and persistence. *(Right—Sharyn Fraser, BC BB champ. Left: body builders at the regional level).*



Physique: I think this class will show the softer side of female bodybuilding, the way the athletes looked before the sport asked them to start looking like men. Physique is so new we are still not quite sure about it but here's the guidelines for Canada—<http://www.physiqueassociation.ca/>

Fitness: I dare say the hardest class you can chose just because of the added gymnastics and dance that are just as time consuming as the cardio and dieting. The routines in Fitness also tear your body down a lot and there's always a high risk for injuries. Fitness competitors are harder looking then Figure girls (this is my favorite look, by the way), hard, muscular, great symmetry and a prominent v-taper. Unfortunately his class is getting smaller by the minute; if you can do a routine, the sport needs you!!! *(Right—Julie Bonnet, Canadian Fitness Pro, 2011)*



Figure: This class requires great symmetry, v-taper, and muscularity focusing especially on shoulders. I always say the bigger your shoulders are the smaller your butt looks! In



Figure a girl needs enough beautifully shaped muscles everywhere, and be lean enough for definition but not too much so she loses any femininity. In this class you can win or lose depending on your shoulders and glutes. To me Figure is sculpturing. You need different size muscles to sculpt the best symmetry and the work is never

done. (Right—Chelsea Gunderson, Figure Champ, 2011 BC provincial. Left—short figure at the Sandra Wickham regional, BC).



Bikini: Alright, this class is all over the place. I prefer the leaner looking bikini athlete but they normally don't do well at local shows. There is a mix and match in body types in the shows and the girls look like they are ranging between 12-25% body fat. Bikini competitors are allowed some muscle especially in the upper body but the legs should only be shaped (not muscular), and although some definition in the abs is allowed, definitely no six pack! Sometimes I'm straight up uncomfortable watching these girls stick their butts out and wiggle it. Let's do what we can for it and keep it a real sport. (Left—Nicole Nagrani, Bikini Champ 2011, USA. Right—bikini tall class at BC Provincials, 2011).



Notice the difference in the level of conditioning between us and Canada? Much more required in the US, but we're catching up!!

Message from Karen: Make sure you know what contests are coming up and which way you want to go...and the rules! Rules are there to safe-guard you...mandatory poses, suit types, levels...you gotta start with a regional contest first. If you come in top 5, you can move on to a Provincial contest, then onto the Nationals. Canada doesn't have as many contests as the US, so that likely accounts for the higher levels of fitness in their competitors as the competition is fierce! Our girls are smaller by nature, but we're catching up!

Drugs: Yep, they're there. And don't be fooled into thinking that the lower level contests will have fewer drugs. They are here to stay, even at the Bikini level. If you want a sport without drugs, take up lawn bowling. Or suck it up and do your best at a physique contest. You can't get them out of the sport now, and you likely won't know whose using (sometimes it's very obvious!), but you're there to do your best, your **Personal Best**, and that's the best goal you can have!

LINKS: Know what the rules are in your area, and what contests are offered in the year. Rules and regulations change all the time, so be on top of it!

BC Amateur BB Association—<http://www.bcabba.org/> Alberta BB Association—<http://www.abba.ab.ca/> Ontario—there are a lot!...do a search.

One good one—<http://www.physiqueassociation.ca/> Canadian BB Fed ...<http://www.cbbf.ca/>

Natural bodybuilding and figure contests...again there are a lot listed. One site to check out is <http://www.naturalbodybuildingevents.com/Intl/2012/canada.htm>

Final Thoughts – Leg Day

Today is leg day, and I'm heading into the gym with training journal in hand. As I put on my gloves I bend down to open up my journal, and I glance at the front cover. At the top of the journal the word "INSPIRE" is printed on it. Inside, there is a little hand-written note from several women who gave me the journal as a gift. "You are an inspiration to us all, Karen. Thank you for all that you do."

I smile. It was what the psychic predicted years ago: *We're all here for a purpose, and your purpose is to inspire.*

Back then I couldn't hear it, given my health and where I was in my life. Now, looking down at those words scribbled there, I now understand that my life's purpose was always there waiting. I just had to step into it.

No resistance.

Years ago I measured success by how perfect my biceps were or whether I won or lost a show. I now know that our victories occur far away from stage lights and trophies. In my quiet spaces, I have been able to heal my spirit and my body, and I am thankful that my body was strong enough to endure what it did, and for as long as it did. But my greatest victory has been the chance to travel on this amazing journey with my son, and to continue traveling on it wherever it takes us.

Let go.

People ask me why, after 30 years, I continue to train as hard as I do. I list any number of reasons: to stay strong, to stay lean, to look good and to function well.

I lift for health reasons, it's true, but I also lift because I feel a connection to my power and to something beyond what I can see. I lift so I can tune into a Universe that's always talking to me, and trying to show me a better way. I lift because it reminds me that I'm still here.

Arms wide open.

I lift out of a deep respect for all things, seen and unseen.
I lift out of a respect for the human body in all its workings.
I lift for my son.

I lift because I can.

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