

From HoHo to KOKO: FITNESS REDEFINED

by Bri Kilroy

We've justified the delicious consumption of holiday food, treats and missed workouts with the promise that, come January, we will all switch to a healthier lifestyle and more active living. About halfway through the month, it's frustratingly apparent how much easier it is said than done. With limited time and energy to distribute among the day's tasks, it's understood why working out falls short of a priority. For those feeling a little defeated, welcome Koko FitClub to your life.

Starting in Massachusetts, Koko FitClub is a digital fitness studio that first opened its doors in 2007 and now has locations in 30 states across the nation. Thanks to owner Randy Wysong, Grand Rapids has a Koko of its own where members have been able to achieve their fitness goals in just 30 days. I was lucky to try it out for myself in exchange for writing this excellent article.

The phrase "digital gym" had me picturing some sort of computer-simulated workout experience within the Matrix. As a trail runner who believes the only fitness equipment needed can be found in the woods, I was prepared to be unimpressed. After all, I've played on a treadmill before.

However, from my first step into Koko to my last glide on the Smartrainer elliptical, I was having more fun than I imagined while working out. It wasn't a weight machine challenging me to be my best or a treadmill influenced by the same concept as a hamster wheel. Instead, everything is based off a revolutionary Smartraining system that uses technology to analyze your body and design an effective fitness plan.

It Begins with Your Goal.

One of Koko's certified FitCoaches works with you to determine your personal fitness goal. Do you want to lose weight? Burn fat? Build muscle? Get stronger? Are you training for a 5k or a marathon followed by a brisk hike up Mount Kilimanjaro? Whatever the objective, it starts with defining something to work toward.

What You're Working With.

This is where the cool technology shows its stuff by measuring your current physical condition without putting you through a strenuous test. A Koko FitCoach shows you how to measure your lean muscle mass (the number of pounds on the scale you can credit to pure muscle), body fat and strength levels. The information is saved to create your own Koko fitness profile with personalized workouts that adapt as you improve.

Take a Hike (or walk, or run).

Your fitness information is stored on a flashdrive, which becomes your key to accessing workouts designed for you. Begin with a Smartraining cardio session on Koko's treadmills or ellipticals, choosing from various scenarios matching different intensities from a run on the boardwalk to a hike in the mountains. Plug your headphones into the machine and the voice of a personal trainer joins and motivates you through the workout while filling you in with fitness and nutrition tips, making you stronger in body and mind by the time the 15-minute cardio session is finished.

Where's the Beef? On Your Arms!

Now that your body is warmed up to maximum calorie burning mode, head to the Smartrainers for strength training. While most strength training results in injury due to improper technique, Koko masters an injury-



Koko Fitness Club provides tailored fitness plans by using a revolutionary Smartraining system that adds life and motivation to your gym experience.



free program by focusing on the three key strength training variables: exercise pace, exercise periodization and exercise progression. As you perform various strength exercises, you are challenged to reach your full potential while becoming aware of your body's limits. Before you get discouraged that your arms wobbled at 20 pounds and your legs remained dormant when they were challenged to press 50 pounds, remember that these measurements give you a number to improve upon and allow you to see your increasing strength levels as you progress.

Do you want to lose weight? Burn fat? Build muscle? Get stronger? Are you training for a 5k or a marathon followed by a brisk hike up Mount Kilimanjaro?

What's Your Excuse?

No time? With round-the-clock access and streamlined, 45-minute workouts covering cardio and strength training, the time it takes to make excuses is greater than the time it takes to drag yourself to the gym. No one to go with? Even on your first visit you're part of the Koko community, greeted with smiles and encouragement from members and staff that makes



you feel like you've been there since the beginning. It's too boring? You're on to the next workout before you get a chance to be bored with the first one. Plus Koko FitClub is a fresh, fun environment beyond comparison to a commercial gym. With playlist-worthy music and energetic color scheme, the last thing you'll want to do is sit down.

Give yourself the gift of trying something new this year and shape up to conquer 2015 and the adventures ahead. Between now and January 31, download a free guest pass at www.KokoFitClubmi.com for a complimentary fitness assessment and workout session. Visit the Koko FitClub of Grand Rapids-

Cascade at 2845 Thornhills Ave. and introduce a resolution that you'll love keeping up with.



Bri Kilroy is a Grand Valley and AmeriCorps alumni who learned to type through vigorous Mavis Beacon trainings. She also passes as an artist, illustrator and author of this bio.



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