

"A Revolution in the Boot Camp Philosophy" (Sunfare Newsletter, Feb 2005)

When looking for a good way to get fit, the sound of fitness "boot camp" has its appeal but may be slightly overbearing. Sure, you may want to get into great shape, but do you really want your daily workout run by a militaristic ex drill-instructor who, well...yells?

Enter Sonki Fitness – a revolution in the boot camp philosophy. Owner and Fitness Titan Sonki Hong is the mastermind behind this truly enjoyable method of group training. By extracting everything that's great about a boot camp approach and ignoring the rest (like fatigues), the external motivation here is based on a philosophy of positive reinforcement, where fun, friendship, and encouragement are as important to your success as the intensity you bring to each workout.

An eclectic mix of exercises are practiced in each 60 minute class in order to maximize results, keep the routines unpredictable, and expose you to a variety of disciplines that you can use when the five week course is complete, though you may be so hooked that you'll find yourself among the 75% of students who return for another round. The format can range from circuit training one day (think strength, aerobic, core, and isometrics, mix in some stretching and agility drills, and pray that you make it through the entire hour), to playing games the next, to obstacle courses, martial arts, hiking, running, and the list goes on. Suffice it to say that you'll never know what's in store, which makes for a refreshing experience that is tremendously effective for your health.

Something particularly enticing is that all classes are held outside, rain or shine. In its own way, doing pushups in a downpour is as invigorating as power hiking on a crisp, cloudless day. Each course offers three classes per day, four days a week (M, W, F, Sa), and classes are held in beautiful locations in Santa Monica, Beverly Hills, and Westwood. A typical course is surprisingly affordable at only \$250, and depending on where you are, class size ranges from 6 to 30 people per. Personal, Group (which varies slightly from Boot Camp), and Corporate training are also available.

This is definitely the type of fitness outlet that needs to be experienced firsthand, especially if you're unfamiliar with this kind of training or want a break from the monotony of gym life. It's a results oriented and reliable way to "get into the best shape of your life" that will reciprocate exactly what you put into it on a physical level. But you may find the real rewards come with the friendships forged and the experience of self improvement on a collective scale.