

Broadview Heights Business Spotlight April 2017: Perpetual Fitness



Perhaps you have noticed Perpetual Fitness in the Wellpointe Plaza at Route 82 & Broadview Roads, but did you know the business's goal is to be a friendly safe-haven for those ready to change their lives from the inside out? Broadview Heights's Economic Development Director talked with Perpetual Fitness's owner Dan Salupo about his passion for healthy living and healthy environments, and how he ended up here in Broadview Heights!



Dan Salupo of Perpetual Fitness

Q: How did Perpetual Fitness get started?

A: My main passion is helping people transform their lives. Fitness is the foundation for that. I think when people are unhappy and are looking to make changes in their life, fitness is one of the first places that they start. People get started thinking if they make a change by coming to work out, it might be the catalyst for other changes. The motivation might stem from wanting to lose weight, feel better, have more energy, be stronger, healthier---many things. Fitness is a great platform to allow me to be able to be interactive and engage with people at a time that they are hungry for change.

Q: How long has Perpetual Fitness been around?

I formally started my business here in Broadview Heights, in the Wellpointe Plaza, in 2015, with one suite where I did just personal training. After about six months I got to a point where I was at capacity and had to start turning people away, which was completely against what I ever want to do. So, I started to talk to my clients, who at that point had been with me a few months and were getting very fit,

and realized that they didn't need that type of personalized training and expense anymore, and could probably do just as well if they were in a group setting. All of the clients were doing similar weights and movements, and it seemed like I could group them together.

Then, the space next door to my existing suite became available, so I really started to consider the possibility of expanding. Finally, one morning, when it was very early and dark outside, as I pulled up to the studio I saw that the front door to the neighboring suite had a key in it. I walked up to the door and it was open, so I let myself in. It was a sign, and I decided to take the plunge into expansion! As of June 2016, we officially expanded into the additional space and have continued to grow ever since!

Q: I recall your expansion last summer (June, 2016), complete with signage and a ribbon cutting!

A: Yes! Prior to that I didn't have a sign or do much formalized advertising. I wasn't yet prepared to open the doors to the public, as I didn't have a large amount of space to service them. When I started out I wanted to be very prepared and be able to adequately service clients, so I took things slow as I got my feet wet.



Ribbon Cutting for June 2016 expansion of Perpetual Fitness

It would have been detrimental to accept clientele and to take the risk of having them feel like I was unprepared, not serious or ready to accept their business, or didn't have the space or time for them, so I had to operate differently. However, once I was ready for the business to become official, I put the sign up. I can now help anyone who comes to me, and it's a great feeling!

Q: What made you bring your business to Broadview Heights?

A: This is my community. I grew up in the area. My family has had their business here for a long time, and my cousins are still running it here. I have a lot of respect for Brecksville and Broadview Heights. That being said, I took a look at my business market and felt like there were certain needs in the market that were not being met. I am here because I want to supply that gap with its need. Mostly though, this is my home and having an established network left me comfortable to begin a grassroots fitness effort in the way that I want to.

Q: Tell me a little bit about Perpetual Fitness' business model.

A: At the core are our sound fitness programs, but what people will first notice is that we have tried to make Perpetual Fitness a place people want to come to and call their community. You can get results from a lot of fitness programs; many of them can all be proven to work. However, if a specific physical fitness program is clinically flawless, but you don't look forward to actually doing it, it doesn't matter how good it is. When you can have a very sound, scientifically proven fitness program *and* make

it something that people look forward to, then you have something cool. And I think that's what we have done a really great job of doing!

For example, I received an email from a new client the other day where she said (pulls up his email): "You know that uncomfortable feeling where people stare at you because you are new and doing everything wrong? Every single person in your place came up and introduced themselves to welcome me. Now I have to come back, and I never saw myself as a CrossFitter!"



A Perpetual Motion group class photo

I am so proud of my clients. It's such a community here. It's a tight, fun group of people that are non-judgmental. We are all very friendly and very welcoming. I have a rule that I haven't been able to carry out here yet, but, it's 1000 burpees if you walk by someone here that you don't know and don't say hello.

Q: How did you build that community, and did you do it consciously?

A: Absolutely, yes, it was intentional. In order for my fitness philosophy to flourish, I want there to be as little barriers to entry as possible – in fact, that's why our client's first class here is always free. I want them to be able to come in, check out the atmosphere and try out the workouts.

I know that for someone to get to the point of reaching out to me, they need change and are really ready for it. So when that happens, I want their transition into the fitness lifestyle to be seamless. That is why we offer many class times, we work around their schedules, and we try to give them the best experience possible. If a client has a bad experience that might push them to remain sedentary for another five years until they work up the courage to do something about it.

Q: What type of fitness programs do you offer here at Perpetual Fitness?

A: We offer a variety of options and fitness styles, all of which can be viewed virtually on our website (<http://perpetualfitnesscle.com>). I'm also continually growing the business and classes too! Now, we offer private, personal training, which is how we started. We also have group classes. We have a boot camp class, which is very much like a CrossFit but is more like aerobic style, very higher intensity, and longer duration. We also just launched Perpetual Youth, for kids aged 13-17, primarily focused on athletic development, speed, strength, skill, a little more sports specific training. All of our classes are scheduled on-line. All of our programming is listed there too so customers can shop around, see what we offer and sign up with what they want to try. Or people can reach out to me directly and I will reserve a spot for them!

Q: Your group classes revolve around the CrossFit style programs. Can you explain what that is for those who might not be familiar with it?

A: CrossFit is a constantly varied function of movements executed at high intensity. What that means is that 90% of the workouts we do here in a CrossFit environment, you'll never do again. Those are original workouts, designed and redesigned to keep your muscles constantly challenged. The other 10% of the workouts are benchmark workouts that we come back to throughout the year. That 10% has names and we revisit them to make sure we are progressing.

The other 90% of the workouts are changing or constantly varied. Why constantly varied is important is because if you just do one type of movement in your workout, like, for instance, Power Lifters or Bench Pressers, and you test them on those movements, they can execute a group of movements but in terms of general fitness they can't perform very well. They probably wouldn't do too well in something like a Triathlon, or a 5K race,



A Perpetual Motion group class completing their Workouts of the Day, or WOD

because their fitness is focused on specializing in their training. For them to get results in their specialization it takes a lot of training because they've overloaded their system and it's adapted. When you focus on one type of training, it causes that adaptation to take place. Why we constantly vary workouts is because we are trying to constantly adapt the body to different movements instead of keeping the body stagnant.

Think about it this way, when you haven't worked out in a long time and you first go back to the gym you do 5 sets of 10 reps and what happens the next day? You're sore. Say you go back the next day, use the same weights and do the same sets. What happens the next day? You're less sore. Go back a third time, do the same thing, what happens then? You're not going to get sore at all, and that is because your body is adapting. The first time your body goes through that process and you're sore, your body goes through what is called overload. All of the muscle fibers break down and then afterwards build themselves up, thinking they'll be ready in case that break down happens again. Overtime, your body will adapt to that process. What needs to be introduced is that constant overload, and that is what CrossFit does; it varies the movements so that you're constantly giving the body something to adapt to.

Q: What type of body results does CrossFit lead to, i.e. endurance, strength? I generally assume most CrossFit folks are very muscular, is that correct?

A: No, CrossFit trained properly leads to use of all muscles and systems for wholly balanced fitness. There is no specialization in CrossFit. Our goal is to be well rounded individuals. We help our clients prepare to run a 5K, to squat their own body weight or more, to deadlift, and to compete in as premier athletes in skilled sports like Football or Gymnastics.

Q: So who designs your work out plans?

A: We do all of that in-house. They are designed fresh, every day, and those are called the Workouts of the Day, or WOD. And I can tell you, because we are constantly varying our workouts, our clients will find they are naturally very good at some workouts and others are more challenging. It's those challenging things that keep you coming back because you want to accomplish them!



A community yoga class at Perpetual Fitness

Q: Do you do any yoga here? I'm a yoga fan. Does that even pair well with something like CrossFit?

A: Yes, we love yoga and are collaborating with another local studio in town to feed off of one another's businesses! It works great with CrossFit because where CrossFit does a lot of muscle contracting, Yoga does a lot of muscle lengthening.

Q: I do have to ask how you got your name, Perpetual Fitness. Where did that come from?

A: I thought about that for a really long time! I went through the dictionary searching for a word that would be the perfect fit. Perpetual just popped out at me; I liked the name, I liked that perpetual meant constantly endless movement, motion, bodies in motion. So the messaging behind that is be moving, not sedentary. And that is my philosophy. Whatever it is, just keep moving.

Q: I see now, understanding your fitness philosophy and offerings at Perpetual Fitness how that fits perfectly! As a business owner, what is the biggest risk you have ever taken?

A: Expanding the business into a group space. That move wasn't just doubling down, it was quadrupling down. I went from 700 square feet to 3200 square feet. It was a large move and I wasn't even open a year. It all happened very fast, but I'm glad it did.

Q: Was there any research or extra planning that you did to try to ensure success at that point?

A: I am lucky that I come from a family full of entrepreneurs, so that always helps. I also have my Master's Degree in Marketing, so I am very familiar with the business world myself.

However, it was more about taking a leap of faith. There were a lot of things that showed up in my life that all aligned at once, and that gave me confidence in moving forward to make my decision. I had support from family members and like-minded friends who helped me realize I was in the right place at the right time. I believe that a lot of it has to do with when you are living true to you and you are doing what you love, it's apparent to others, people feel it and they respond to it.

Q: What are your top priorities as a business owner?

A: Community and retention, business development, and business growth. The community part helps with retention because we've gotten to a point where our athletes follow-up with each other if they miss a day or two of working out. We have one event every month---not a fitness event---just a get together to nurture those relationships we all have with each other.



A post-group class photo at Perpetual Fitness

For example, we do potlucks and escape challenges. When we go we like to go to other businesses in the community and also support them. It all goes back to making sure that people have a good experience here at Perpetual Fitness. The business development piece is about being responsive, and evolving business concepts. We have many social media platforms where we document our journey and share with our community. We have educational classes that will be starting here pretty soon, about life transformation, for example limiting beliefs, psychology, goal setting, and things like that. It all goes back to wanting to keep that low barriers to entry and really, genuinely helping people.

Q: That is a very interesting business concept and one that I find in-demand in today's market place, especially by younger consumers who place more of an importance on intrinsic values and helping others. It must be nice to provide a service that is at the same time helping someone.

A: Yes, I'd like to say the business model is completely altruistic, but, there is a demand and it's about adding value in a way that no one else is doing it. That is going to give me a return and give me the lifestyle that I want. But it's all driven by a real desire to help people.

Q: What are you most proud of as a business owner?

A: I am so proud of the community that I've built here at Perpetual Fitness. I'm also very proud of the clients I have who have made drastic health transformations as a result of their hard work. It's been great to have a positive influence on people. I have one client who has lost 90 pounds, and that makes me feel amazing. It's really about the atmosphere.

Q: Do you have any advice for other small business owners or people who might just be starting out?

A: Yes, build what you want to build. Build your business, your life, be authentic, and be true to your authentic self. The market will respond to that. If you try to do something that's not you or try to follow a path you are not meant to take it's going to come across as forced, fake and it will fail in the long run, and leave you unhappy. It's all about you giving your gift to the world. And once you are acting on your authentic self you're going to succeed.

Q: Do you have a favorite thing about Broadview Heights?

A: I'm very excited about the growth that's going on in Broadview Heights, especially near Perpetual Fitness (Broadview Road and Route 82). I think it's very clear that the City cares and is trying to make a lot of moves to make things happen. We are very excited to be located at an area that is growing.

Q: What does the next year look like for Perpetual Fitness?

A: It's going to be an exciting year. I am working on a lot of new ideas that I'm not yet ready to reveal – but stay tuned!

You can find Perpetual Fitness at:

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