

### Re: Our Propensity Toward Intensity

A thank you for giving Lawrence Biscontini the opportunity to address the issue of intensity in his article "Our Propensity Toward Intensity" (March 2014). I have been in the fitness industry for over 30 years and have many of the same concerns that Lawrence had the courage to talk about in that much needed article. I am a professor at a university and many of our students are varsity athletes who have the "more is better" mentality. Over the past years with the growth of CrossFit, Tabata, HIIT and other extreme conditioning programs, there has been a shift away from key ACSM guidelines and principles of basic exercise physiology. I believe all of these conditioning programs have value when used appropriately, but I also question the "more is better" philosophy as I want my body and the bodies of those I work with to be highly functional into the 8th and 9th decades of life! Michael

Bergeron's research addresses some critical issues associated with Lawrence's article and I hope we will see more leaders, like Lawrence, willing to raise important questions about why we are doing what we are doing with extreme conditioning. Kudos to Lawrence! His voice makes a difference in the fitness industry.

—TERRY ECKMANN, Ph.D.  
MINOT, N.D.

### Re: Lawrence's Top 10 Fitness Questions

The May/June article, "Lawrence's Top 10 Fitness Questions," addresses the most pertinent questions that fitness instructors ask. His answers are worthy of our attention, for they give expert and practical advice. Coming from someone who has been an award-winning trainer in the industry several times and seeing his ideas spelled out give me a reassuring feeling that I've been on the right track for years. It's always great to see ideas in practical print. Getting advice

from someone of his caliber is a credit to the magazine. Now you know why I look forward to each issue of your magazine! It is always so beneficial.

SINCERELY,  
BERNADETTE C. O'BRIEN  
LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

In "Lawrence's Top Ten Fitness Questions" (May/June 2014), Lawrence Biscontini correctly asserts that yoga is not a religion. It is important to point out, however, the spiritual nature of yoga. Wikipedia defines yoga as *the physical, mental, and spiritual practices or disciplines which originated in ancient India with a view to attain a state of permanent peace of mind in order experience one's true self*. Yoga practitioners, teachers and studio owners routinely describe yoga as affecting "mind, body and soul." If, as Biscontini states, "education is the key," then we must recognize the history and presence of spirituality in yoga. To deny or underemphasize the spirituality of yoga is to ignore

the vast numbers of people who practice and enjoy it for that very purpose. Fitness instructors must not assume yoga is compatible with the beliefs and spiritual practices of all people. Fitness professionals should honor the spiritual decisions of individuals and institutions, offering stretching and strengthening alternatives to those who do not wish to practice yoga.

BEST REGARDS  
(NAME WITHHELD BY REQUEST)

### It's the Berries

We'd like to thank the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council for providing the delicious Fruit Kebab recipe featured in the July/August issue of *American Fitness*. However, the attribution should have read: *Recipe and photo used with permission from the U.S. Highbush Blueberry Council*. Please accept our apologies for this error of omission.

—AMERICAN FITNESS  
EDITORS



**We Want to Hear From You!** Send your comments, questions and suggestions via email, mail or fax.

Letters to the *Aerobics and Fitness Association of America (AFAA)* as well as *American Fitness* magazine and the AFAA website must include the sender's full name, valid mailing address and telephone number. Names will be withheld from letters selected by AFAA for publication or request of the sender. Any such requests must be clearly stated in the letter because AFAA does not contact senders prior to publication. By submitting a letter to *American Fitness* and/or the AFAA website, you agree that the letter and its contents are the property of AFAA, and may be edited and published in any format by AFAA in *American Fitness*, other AFAA publications and the AFAA website, without limitation.