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My Name is Ron,

I am 41 years old and I have just joined Zest's Gym. So how did I get here?

I first joined a normal gym, six years ago with the expectation of losing this belly, which I have slowly grown since the age of 30. I still have the belly and its getting bigger. I am confused about all the media information I read. Every Google search brings up a different answer to the same question!

Finally, a good friend of mine who attended Zest before, said "I have the answer to your predicament." Go to the Team at Zest Fitness Studio. They offer 2 services there, one of which might suit you. Firstly they offer their well established "one to one training programmes" and secondly they have just launched their new "Private Members Gym."

So, nervously, I logged onto their website www.zest.ie as, I knew that the email that I was about to send, could drastically change my life forever.

Zest got back to me the same day. They said that they would book me in for an appointment for a free chat with a head trainer, but on condition that I filled in the form they emailed me. They said that the answers of this test would determine whether they would consider taking me on as a client and getting me in for that chat in Zest.

I am a pretty determined person and a hard worker, so I am delighted to say that Zest booked me in for a chat. I met one of the head trainers and we discussed the answers that I had given on my online form. The trainer assessed my goals and talked me through the whole process including the fact that I would need to go through Zest's 5 step assessment procedure. He said I would not get any results unless I went through the following assessment procedure.

- 1) Lifestyle analysis (sleep, hydration, meal times, stress levels, relaxation time, injury analysis) and any other relevant lifestyle factors which we in Zest have found, have hindered peoples progress in the past. If we can work on getting the basics right, you will get results.
- 2) Nutrition Analysis and recommendations, including a customised diet for you.
- 3) Postural assessment – head to toe body analysis, to assess injury, misalignment, strain.
- 4) Gym Show through – Time to get you moving with a movement analysis, introduction to a heart rate monitor and our warm up routines
- 5) Postural programme show through – your customised postural enhancement/strengthening/ stretching programme will be shown to you.

My goal, was to lose 2 stone off my belly. I have tried everything, including many diets, but I am none the slimmer. A few things the trainer said really hit home with me. The fact that I don't sleep

well, eat at the wrong times, often don't eat enough, don't drink enough water, have this niggling injury in my neck, all contribute to the fact that I am where I am!

I signed up anyway and made my first appointment for my Lifestyle analysis. That evening I received an email which contained a link to the online questionnaires that I had to fill in. There were 74 questions about my lifestyle, and by the end of filling it in, I knew I had a lot of work to do regarding the "way I live my life and the bad habits I have!" When I had completed the questionnaires, the programme automatically generated a report, that highlighted in Red, Graphically – the areas in which I had to focus my attention.

I met my trainer the next day. He had already seen my lifestyle report. I knew that he knew, that my lifestyle was awful! But I was here to learn, and after some assurances by him that "I could really do this" if I put the effort in, I felt more at ease.

It was time for action and some serious lifestyle changes. We designed a customised plan that would work for me, so sleep better and longer, reduce my stress levels, make more time for eating and more time to see my family. We decided that it was better that I exercised first thing in the morning too, before my phone gets turned on.

My next assessment was a nutritional evaluation. In advance of this, I had to log my eating content and behaviour, as well doing some more work to establish what Metabolic Type, that I am. I had no idea that the assessments would be so investigative and extensive, but on the other hand all the info made total sense to me.

I then went through the postural assessment, with Nathan, the trainer in Zest who specialises in this area. It took the full hour. I was so curious to know what he was logging on his charts. With the amount of ink he used, I thought he was doing a bleeding portrait.

A couple of days later, Nathan had my new programme ready. He showed me his findings and suggested that the reason for my ongoing pain in my back was not my definitive gym programme, but one which I was to do myself, for 20 minutes per day. I always knew that I was a little twisted in my torso, but he suggested that the reason that my back was sore, was due to a bulging disc. The exercises which I was given that day were designed to gradually centre the disc back into place. I would do them every day as I would just love to finally get rid of this back pain.

After a couple more assessments, I was finally permitted to make my first booking in the gym. My first work out in 3 years. I could not help thinking about how I would fair in that gym. Had visions of being destroyed and getting sick with the effort, but to my surprise, it went very well, but boy I could feel it in my muscles the next day!

Now 3 weeks on, I am more energetic, I feel I am in a real training regime which I will hopefully, be able to sustain for the rest of my life. Life is good and I get up every morning thinking that way..