

(Health and Wellness) Koficore Studios: A holistic approach to fitness

Written by Brandi Phillips

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Koficore Studios in Minneapolis is like no other gym that I have ever visited. The space is so beautiful and so comfortable. Dark cherry wood covers the entire studio floor. Koficore Studios is extremely clean and loaded with all the equipment a person will need for a complete workout.

The studio also includes a first class acupuncture room, message therapy room, shower and waiting room.

I was promptly greeted by the owner Kofi Robinson, a man who is in very good physical shape and seems to take his fitness very seriously. After our initial greeting Robinson walked me into his office to begin our interview.

Robinson has been working as a fitness coach and trainer for the last 12 years. He has had his studio on Franklin and Pillsbury Ave. So., for the last 5 years. He proudly reveals that he has retained 90% of his clientele since the move to this new location. One of Robinson's clients drives from suburban Orono to South Minneapolis, just to receive his expertise and services.

Koficore Studios provides clients with personal training and individual class options including yoga and Tai Chi. A client also has the opportunity to buy monthly memberships to his gym, giving access to unlimited classes and weekly personal training classes.

Most of his clientele, he claims, come to him to get a "real workout". Robinson says, "Most people go to the bigger and better known gyms to socialize. My studio provides clients with the opportunity to get in a workout in a space where accountability is important. Once you enter the studio, there is no chilling out. My programs are well planned and well thought out."

Robinson prides himself on "Giving his clients the tools to fish and then letting them go fish for the rest of their lives."

"If you have a hap-hazard lifestyle that includes poor eating, poor sleeping and poor thoughts, exercise alone will not improve your overall health," he says.

He admits that he gets a lot of excuses from people regarding their ability to fit exercise into

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their lifestyles.

Robinson likes to take a holistic approach to fitness. "That means eating well, 8 hours of sleep per night to let your body rejuvenate, positive thought and exercise that includes cardio and strength training to improve your overall health," he says. Robinson acknowledges his difference from most other trainers in the city, describing himself as one of only six holistic trainers in Twin Cities.

Like most businesses, Robinson says Koficore Studios has suffered some due to the current economy, but he is thankful for his returning clientele and the blessings he has received from this business in our community. "I am very blessed to be doing what I am doing and to have the clientele that I have," he says.

Fitness tips from Kofi Robinson:

- Find an educated fitness professional to work with.
- Make sure they assess you. If they are not assessing, they are guessing.
- Everyone is different and needs a different program to reach their goals.
- Use exercise as a supplement to your program.
- If you are not in good health, classes can help you sustain and improve health.
- Breakfast is the most important meal and should be the "biggest" meal of the day.
- The "what not to eat" list is shorter than the "what to eat" list.

His advice to people who want to get into the fitness profession:

- Go to college, and study the body. Be strong in anatomy, physiology and kinesiology.
- Intern at a small fitness facility to see how they do it.

I plan to go take my first yoga class at his studio in the next week. I know I am going to enjoy it because the studio alone is an experience. I would strongly encourage anyone who can get over to his studio to take the opportunity to have proper fitness training.

While you are there, make sure that you actually take the time to meet Kofi. He will help you look at health in a different, more positive way, no matter what your fitness level! You will discover that Kofi Robinson takes his work very seriously by walking the walk and talking the talk.

Koficore Studio is located at 104 West Franklin Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55404. He can be reached at 612-871-4831 or by email: kofi@koficore.com and website: koficore.com.

Brandi Phillips is a personal trainer, life skills coach and professional dancer. She is interested in cultivating health in children and sustaining the health of seniors.