

# be physical

## Progressive Fitness

by Lauren Zimmerman

For those who strive to be healthy, it might be a daily struggle to see through the mass of information thrown at you by the media, advised by “professionals” or advertised by the next great weight loss sensation. This artificial “health” quite often leaves the individual disheartened and deficient. What if health isn’t just about

fields including rehabilitation, physical therapy and professional athletics.

The team at Progressive Fitness comprises the only group of CHEK professionals practicing together in South Carolina. Fickling has been a personal trainer in Charleston for the past six years and is certified as a Level

I CHEK Exercise Coach and Holistic Lifestyle Coach. Drake has been working in the Charleston area for the past 10 years and in 2000 was recognized by The City Paper as Charleston’s Best Personal Trainer. He is certified as a Level I CHEK Practitioner and Holistic Lifestyle Coach. Each works with his clients to create customized exercise plans that focus on the fundamental roots of human movement — flexibility, stability, strength and power. All personal trainers on staff are

consultation to each new client, and the questionnaire can be viewed on their Web site.

The clients of Progressive Fitness come from all walks of life. Fickling and Drake have had the opportunity to train pro basketball player Jerry Stackhouse. Fickling recently worked alongside Rick Carlisle, coach of the Dallas Mavericks, to revamp the team’s training routine. But it is the everyday public who most affect Fickling and Drake. “Seeing a significant change in a client who was experiencing digestive problems or seeing a person quit smoking to take on a better lifestyle” affords the utmost satisfaction for them, they explain. When a client embraces the responsibility to reshape his or her life, the two are reminded why they truly love what they do for a living.

Progressive Fitness will participate in Charleston’s First Annual Total Health Fair. The team will be among an estimated 80 vendors all drawn together to promote health and wellness in the Charleston community. From Jan. 23 to Jan. 25, the team will make presentations and participate in demonstrations. Scott Dawson, another trainer at Progressive Fitness, holds the only Russian Ket-



the number on the scale? What if it could be about happiness — contentment, balance and health — in the true sense of the word?

As I sat down with the co-owners of Progressive Fitness, Mike Fickling and David Drake, I found the two profoundly passionate about their profession. Progressive Fitness is, to the core, a one-on-one holistic health and performance studio. Planted in the back of the South Windermere Shopping Center, which some rumor to be the oldest shopping strip in South Carolina, Progressive Fitness opened its doors in 2006. With the vision to create a gym that addresses health and vitality, Fickling and Drake have established themselves among the local community and transformed the lives of many. The two worked together at The Academy of Exercise, where they developed their training and found they shared a similar health philosophy. Drake explains they “discovered themselves as a gateway towards opening up other avenues to refine for people.”

This health philosophy is grounded on the principles taught at the CHEK Institute. The CHEK Institute, which stands for Corrective Holistic Exercise Kinesiology, is based in California and was founded by Paul Chek. As an author, educator, inventor and consultant, Paul Chek created an educational system that focuses on the physical and mental aspects of well-being, thus assessing the body as a whole. CHEK professionals work in a variety of

given the education to become certified as a Holistic Lifestyle Coach, Level I, through the CHEK Institute. They help their clients identify negative stressors and develop coping mechanisms to encourage well-balanced thoughts, breathing, hydration, nutrition, movement and rest.

With a focus on individualized training, each new client must go through a full body assessment. “If you aren’t assessing, you are guessing,” says Fickling. The assessment is two-fold and includes a questionnaire that covers family history, past and present injuries/ailments, whether or not the client has had any physical therapy, etc. The second part is a style assessment to test the client’s full range of motion. This total body assessment is something both Fickling and Drake believe separates Progressive Fitness from the slew of other gyms. They offer a free

tle Ball Level I certification in the Charleston area and will be among the demonstrators.

From the words of Paul Chek, “All one needs to do to reach their potential as a human being is to take ownership and responsibility for their creations.” Fickling and Drake aim to continue to influence as many people to take accountability for their health. They intend to spread the teachings of the CHEK Institute and have clients walk out the door feeling rejuvenated from their time spent at Progressive Fitness.

**Progressive Fitness is located at 47 Windermere Blvd. Suite B in Charleston. Call 843-225-6622 for more information or visit [www.progressivefitnesscharleston.com](http://www.progressivefitnesscharleston.com).**



Co-Owner David L. Drake



C.H.E.K Holistic Life Coach Annie Banks



Co-Owner Mike Fickling with client Dr. Eric P. Bassett