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Keeping mind, body and spirit in shape



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GASTROENTEROLOGY

Danvers, MA

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Newburyport — As a greater number of people discover the benefits of keeping mind, body and spirit healthy and in shape, it's no surprise there is a rise in demand for alternative health services, including those which cater to feeling right and exercising right. But perhaps the quickest growing trend right now, in part due to Jamie Oliver's latest television series, "Food Revolution," is that of eating right.

For healthy lifestyle coach Alice Greene, the awareness is her dream coming true. Over the past six years, Greene has been educating hundreds of men and women and coaching them into healthy lifestyles with an emphasis on feeling good.

"The orientation of my program is focusing on what it is that feels good

mentally, physically, and emotionally," said Greene, who claims to be a success story, herself, as she has gone from a size 16 nine years ago to a size 6 now.

"It's not really about the weight or the size you wear — you could be a really healthy size 16 and that's OK — it's really about feeling better."

Greene's programs do not require rigorous gym schedules or depriving diets. Instead, they focus on moderation and doing what feels right. She says setting the goals realistically encourages success, and with success people are motivated to make the changes long-term.

"I have taken all the rules away," said Greene. "Being healthy isn't about making radical changes; it's about making simple changes and doing it in a way that makes you not want to stop."

This year, Greene has developed a special challenge — New You 2010 Healthy Lifestyle Contest — to drum up more interest in the concept. So far, according to Greene, the contest has been a huge success. The initial competition started with one group of seven contestants, and there has been so much interest since its start in January that Greene has added several more groups to follow along and receive complimentary coaching and guidance.

For contestant Maureen Willey of Salisbury, the contest has been exactly what she needed.

"I've struggled with weight my whole life — since elementary school," said Willey. "Alice has helped me become more aware of what I'm eating without depriving myself of anything, and I'm actually choosing to eat fresh vegetables and other healthy things."

Willey said she engaged in very little exercise before the contest began. Now she works out at the gym four or five days a week and has learned to swim.

"Really, to think you can affect that kind of change in four months at the age of 54 is amazing," said Willey. "I've had a complete turn-around and feel great."

Because Greene and her contestants post weekly on a Newburyport Today (newburyport-today.com) blog, anyone can follow along and help themselves to a better lifestyle. Greene said the blog attracts thousands of readers and is in the top three of hundreds on the Newburyport Today site.

"My goal is to help one million people," she said. "I don't really have an end in sight, so I'm just going to keep working until I die!"

But Greene is not alone in her desire to promote a healthy lifestyle and adds that there is a definite trend — especially thanks to Michelle Obama and Jamie Oliver — to live healthier.