

Fit'n Style

MAGAZINE

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EMMA
WATSON
THE BEAUTY WIZARD

SUMMER
FUN
IN THE
SURF
& SUN

FOOD
COMBOS
TO UPGRADE
YOUR HEALTH

MAYA
NASSAR'S
FITNESS QUEST

SELFIE
SYNDROME

SEX
RELATIONS
IN THE DIGITAL AGE

CAROLE
HAJJ
*“Always look at the
positive side of life.”*

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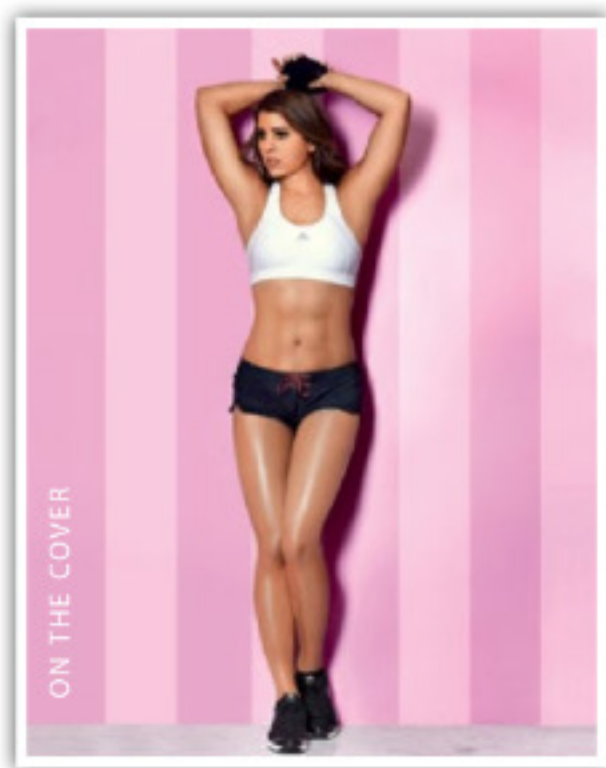
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said: "Good things come to those who wait."
"Great things come to those who are willing
to work hard for them!"



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THAT 'AHA' MOMENT THAT LEADS YOU TO

'START LIVING RIGHT'

INTERVIEW WITH MAYA NASSAR

Sports Nutritionist, Certified Personal Trainer, and Bikini Competitor

BY | KRISTINE BOUJAOUDE

IT ALL STARTED THE DAY SHE COULDN'T GET HER JEANS UP. AND I AM NOT TRYING TO BE FRIVOLOUS OR CYNICAL WHEN I SAY THAT. MAYA NASSAR, THE CREATOR OF WEBSITE WWW.STARTLIVINGRIGHT.NET, STRIDES INTO STARBUCKS FOR OUR SCHEDULED INTERVIEW WITH WORKOUT GEAR IN TOW AND A GLIMMER IN HER EYE. THIS IS A YOUNG WOMAN THAT EXUDES BLATANT FORTITUDE. VERY SINCERE AND DOWN TO EARTH, I EXPECT A DETAILED AND FAR-REACHING STORY ABOUT HOW SHE MANAGED TO GET HER BODY IN GEAR... IN SUCH GREAT SHAPE THAT SHE ACTUALLY DECIDES TO SIGN UP FOR A BIKINI AND FITNESS COMPETITION IN LONDON, THE MIAMI PRO EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS, BACK IN JULY OF 2013.



"WHAT MADE YOU CHANGE YOUR LIFE AROUND AND WORK TOWARDS THE FIT AND TONED PHYSIQUE YOU HAVE TODAY?" I ASKED MAYA.

"IT ALL STARTED THE DAY I COULDN'T PULL UP MY FAVORITE PAIR OF JEANS..."

Most of us have been there. Weighing ourselves day in and day out; promising to cut out sweets, stop eating bread, head to the gym more often, drink more water, eat more fruit, walk and jog more.... Too many of us convince ourselves to head down this road, only to stop off for a minouche and throw the whole plan in the toilet. The point of the matter of all this is: if this determined young woman can convince herself to plan for the body she has always wanted, why can't anyone else? Maybe you just need that 'Aha' moment as well to put things into perspective. So where does someone even start?

"Just a few years ago, I was out of shape; I ate unhealthy foods and I didn't exercise. It was that simple moment when I couldn't get my jeans past my knees that everything turned around for me. I knew I couldn't go on like that and needed to change my lifestyle. I bought a book - Burn the Fat Feed the Muscle - and started to educate myself from that moment in time," she explained.

Maya headed straight to the Internet to start her plan. She searched for the best in the business to offer her knowledgeable advice to create an effective nutrition plan and workout schedule. So far, so good. With a few hits and misses... the Internet can be full of incorrect information and scams... she got her full plan in gear.





"I don't think anyone should rely on the scale. It can be so deceiving. If you look at my before and after photos, you would think that my weight had changed dramatically. It didn't. However, the fact that I lost centimeters is another story, the story you should go by. Pay attention to how your clothes fit you, how they start to get looser. That is one realistic way to prove your body is actually changing and taking on a new form."

MAYA JUST WON FIRST PLACE AMONGST 30 FEMALES IN THE BIKINI CATEGORY AT THE PURE ELITE FITNESS, MUSCLE & BODYBUILDING COMPETITION ON MAY 4TH, 2014. NOW, SHE IS GETTING READY FOR AN EVEN BIGGER COMPETITION IN FREDERICIA, DENMARK CALLED WBFF (WORLD BEAUTY FITNESS AND FASHION), OF WHICH SHE HAS BEEN ENDORSED BY THE LEBANESE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND SPORTS.

"The WBFF is major for me since it is a huge competition; many competitions in cities across the world are held with the final world championship taking place in Las Vegas. It is one of the fastest growing body building federations internationally and these competitions are known to be really spectacular and enjoyable. I can't wait to take part in it and to have the chance to really push myself and be in the best shape ever. Till now, I don't know of anyone else from Beirut who has participated. I really want to inspire others to also try and enter such competitions."

So one may wonder: What is the attraction with such body building/ bikini competitions?

"It's all about pushing myself to my limits. I don't just want to be fit; I want to take my fitness to the next level and really be in my ideal shape ever. I like challenges and I feel that I won't have the same discipline unless I am training with a specific goal in mind. Sometimes just saying to yourself that you want to lose weight is not enough to give you the determination to actually do it successfully. I am really focused since the New Year; we are talking healthy food all the way... no alcohol or junk food whatsoever. I am currently working on a program with my personal trainer Bashar Diab at G Spa," explained Maya.

Diet, diet, diet. Oh so important, yet so hard to follow. What does the diet of a bikini/fitness competitor-to-be look like?

"It's all about eating completely healthy food, consuming the right kind of protein to build muscle, and eating in such a manner that aids in boosting my metabolism. I was eating up to 2,500 – 3,000 calories per day at the start of my training... and now I am down to 1,600 calories. I am also doing something called "carb cycling" which means I go for a couple of days focused on low carbs with every third day as a high carb day."

Now what about all the infamous posing we see during bikini/fitness competitions? What is the key to success here?

"Yes, there is quite a bit of technique involved with posing. There is a special way to walk and pose to show your physique successfully. It is easier said than done and it takes time to get it just right. There are trainers in this area too! Posing is actually 50% of your success. This year I want to nail it! Spray tans are mandatory – as funny as it sounds – and you can be marked down if you haven't managed your tan effectively."

Now what about all the hard training?

"I do cardio 5 days a week and weight lift 5 days a week as well. Right now I am training with heavy weights with fewer repetitions. I basically change my program every six weeks, and it does get more intensive and challenging as I get closer to my goal."

"Three years ago I was 5 sizes bigger than I am now. I dropped the first 3 sizes in the initial 3-4 months, losing around 15 kilos at that time through healthy dieting, training, and cardio. I am against supplements; I tried fat burners and really lost my mind from the side effects which included insomnia, heart palpitations, anxiety... I won't put anything in my body today that isn't 100% natural... multivitamins, protein powder, and fish oil..."

And with all this training, Maya Nassar also has the time to keep up her fitness infused website, www.startlivingright.net, which has had amazing feedback from fans and followers alike. It offers free online advice, meal plans, and workout programs to help others achieve their fitness goals. She is thrilled with the fact that it is inspiring others.

With all of this expertise under her belt now, it only made sense to plan for bigger and better things.

"I have plans to open my own gym and health center. I want it to be a place that will change people's lives and help them build the body they've always wanted."

So what does a bikini fitness competitor do to fight a sweet tooth craving? The treat of the day is to chew on a sugarless piece of gum! The rest of us have our work cut out for us, don't we!? :)



THE LEBANESE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND SPORTS ANNOUNCED ITS ENDORSEMENT OF MAYA NASSAR TO REPRESENT LEBANON AS AN ATHLETE IN THE UPCOMING WBFF BODYBUILDING EVENT ON MAY 10TH, 2014 IN FREDERICIA, DENMARK.