

Q & A with Full Blast Studio

Fitness Experts: When did you open the Full Blast studio?

Marshall Tully: I opened in late 2004. Prior to that, I was working as a freelance trainer, paying monthly rental fees to various facilities. As I became busier, I started doing the math, and found that for what I was spending every month in gym access fees, I could probably keep my own small facility afloat. And honestly, a lot of it was vanity- I wanted to build my dream gym and operate by my own rules. The first year was a bit of a challenge, but the past year or so has been incredible. At this point, I'm working from a pretty lengthy waiting list.

FE: How is your facility different than a traditional commercial gym?

MT: For starters, there are no "members" - I only do one-on-one training, and clients get the entire facility to themselves for the duration of the session. That's a pretty big deal for some - gyms can be pretty intimidating, and beginners often feel as though they're being judged on their level of ability or what they look like. So I try to make every effort right off the bat to assure a client that nothing like that will happen here. It's a real luxury to be able to train without an audience, and it's infinitely more productive.



FE: How would you describe a "typical" Full Blast client?

MT: Most people come to me to improve their body composition- that is, to lose fat and/or gain muscle. That's more my area of specialty, and it's what I enjoy the most. I also get the call fairly often when U.S. actors are in Toronto shooting a movie. They need the privacy of a discreet location, and of course, their job depends on them looking a certain way by a specific deadline. So those situations are always fun when they come along.

I tend not to work with athletes so much these days- that's a bit of a different language, and there are other trainers and coaches who specialize in that. When you're working with athletes, your top priority is to improve their performance in their chosen sport. Altering body composition can often be contradictory to that goal. Plus, I got into this more as a science geek than a jock. Ironically, I don't really have a lot of interest in sports and I never watch them on TV.

There seems to be an attitude amongst some trainers and coaches that unless you're working with elite athletes, then you're not really operating on a credible level. I wouldn't necessarily agree with that. I don't think there's any dishonor in a teaching a soccer mom how to deadlift or do a pull-up, or get a sedentary desk jockey down to single digit bodyfat. If anything, it requires a broader set of skills and patience.

FE: Describe your approach to training your clients.

MT: The routines I design are ridiculously uncomplicated. At Full Blast, nobody does any goofy party tricks like one-legged balancing on a Bosu ball or anything like that, and unless a client has an injury that prevents them from doing so, everybody deadlifts, and everybody squats. I'm a firm believer in old-school multi-joint strength exercises. They're the most functional movements in terms of duplicating real-life activities, and they're simply the most effective



exercises for making your body look better, regardless of your age or gender.

FE: Where do you see yourself down the road?

MT: I'm working on a book right now called *Muscle Masala*, which will hopefully be out by the end of the year. It's largely a nutrition manual, but with a bit of a different angle: most of the recipes are based on Indian cooking. That's not just a gimmick- the thing about a lot of South Asian food is that it generally tastes even better re-heated, so it lends itself to bulk cooking and freezing. If you're serious about training and nutrition, cooking in bulk is absolutely essential from a time management standpoint. People can sign up at www.musclemasala.com to be notified when the book's released.

I'm collaborating on the project with my wife, Sonia. Aside from being an amazing cook, she's recently undergone one of the most radical physical transformations I've ever seen- all through following the principles we present in the book. We can't wait to get it out there and see what people think.