

EASEL #35: A Six-Week Boot Camp: Changes in Exercise-related Affects and Perceptions

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Purpose: The purpose of this study was to 1) examine the effects of a six-week boot camp program on exercise-related affects and 2) identify motivations for program-adherence.

Methods: Twenty-seven sedentary individuals ($M_{age}=30.04$, $SD=10.33$) joined a six-week boot camp program to exercise at least five days per week, fifty minutes a day. At the onset and completion of the program, participants were administered surveys measuring their motivation for behavior change, self-efficacy for exercise and, perceptions of general health. Participants were also administered a single qualitative item scale at program completion for identifying motivations for program adherence.

Results: Paired sample t tests revealed a significant improvement in participants' mean scores for self-efficacy for exercise ($M=7.21 \pm 2.2$ pre vs. 8 ± 1.65 post; $t = -2.38$, $p < 0.05$) and overall perception of general health ($M=3.17 \pm 1.01$ pre vs. 3.92 ± 0.7 post; $t = -4.21$, $p < 0.05$). Qualitative analyses indicated three themes for program adherence: (1) systemic programing, (2) peer accountability and (3) the sense of community.

Conclusions: These results imply that alternative physical activity (PA) inventions can impact critical precursors of PA behaviors. Structured alternative programs that center around a supportive community while providing a sense of accountability may play a key role in facilitating long term PA behavior. Additional research is needed to further evaluate the potentials of these unconventional approaches to increase activity and decrease sedentariness.