

Fitness For Everybody: Body By Kris Fitness Elite

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Body By Kris Fitness Elite is a state-of-the-art fitness facility that was founded in 2004. Here, a more holistic approach to health and fitness is taken to encourage individuals to improve their overall wellbeing, taking better care of themselves. Nearly nine years have passed since its inception and Kris Krishnaraja, founder/CEO of Body By Kris Fitness Elite reveals his journey related to fitness, which has led to his vision of 'providing the ultimate fitness experience for everyone'.

The decade of 1980 was a turbulent era for Sri Lanka as war created much disorder in the country. Kris faced many difficulties during this decade, which include dealing with the hardships of residing in refugee camps in India and Sri Lanka. As a child he recalls feeling desperate and fearful while sailing through rough seas as his family was trafficked along

with hundreds of other refugees on fishing boats to camps. "Fortunately my family was granted asylum to live in Canada in 1992. One day I was living in a camp with at times only one meal a day, then one day I woke up and McDonald's was in front of me and everyone was speaking a different language," said Krish reflecting on the sudden change that he had to undergo as a teenager. "It was a different culture altogether."

The acculturation process into Canadian society was difficult for Kris as he had to juggle his studies with a part-time job. Though many adolescents who had dealt with trauma succumb to peer pressure and use drugs and alcohol, Kris was able to break away from such norms. Steve, a colleague from work introduced Kris to the gym. "I was inspired by Steve's amazing physique and wanted to look like him," he said, "In the gym, I found it was easy to make conversation. People came from all kinds of backgrounds and they wanted to make a change about themselves. I was able to relate to them as I also wanted to make a change."

As fitness became part of his life Kris was able to overcome his past trauma and build his body into perfect shape, developing his confidence, strength and all other aspects in his life. Inspired by all these positive effects, Kris aspired to help others reach their goals and became a professional in the fitness field. In Toronto he pursued a career as a freelance trainer and consultant realising that individuals from ethnic minorities found it difficult to enjoy the benefits of a fitness centre as they had no culturally appropriate place where they felt comfortable enough to exercise in. Wanting to make fitness accessible to people from all backgrounds, and perceiving that Sri Lanka has a greater need for such an establishment, he turned his attention towards his home country. Wanting to be a part of the development process, Kris came to Sri Lanka. "I thought one day I would like to fly with my Sri Lankan passport," said Kris. "The more this country develops, more people who live abroad could also benefit. I had all these dreams and that's why I came back."

In 2004, Kris left Canada and opened a modest 3,500sqft club in Colombo 7. The club was a resounding success as, for the first time in Sri Lanka, more individuals were able to enjoy exercising in a fully equipped club. However, envisioning a concept of a spacious gym, the fitness centre was moved to its current location in Kohuwala in 2008. He wanted to provide an environment where members of the fitness centre were able to move around and interact with others, while giving enough space and privacy to exercise on their own. Kris designed the entire facility himself creating a mind-blowing, energizing atmosphere, which inspires people to exercise. "We put in all our energy and resources into the gym to make it better," said the CEO demonstrating the dedication put forth. "Before at Gregory's Road, we painted

the gym and put some mirrors. At that time it was enough, but now it is not. This shows that the industry is growing and because of that the service is better and customers can expect more.”

Body by Kris Fitness Elite is located in Tissara Plaza and is open every day so that members could fit exercise into their busy schedules. It also offers a wide range of free weights, selectorised and plate loaded equipment, personally selected by Kris from America’s most respected lines. The fitness centre is equipped with more than 100 art resistance and cardiovascular training equipment, allowing members to incorporate more variety into their fitness regimes. This also allows more people to work out at the same time without having to wait for their turn rendering an efficient workout.

The Body By Kris New Member Orientation Programme guides new members through their workouts and instruct on how to use machines safely and independently while providing individual fitness assessments to find their current level of strength and fitness. Afterwards, each member has an in-depth fitness consultation with Kris where he provides members recommendations for a healthier lifestyle, and develops a customised training schedule tailor-made to suit each member’s needs. Explaining the advantages of Body By Kris Fitness Elite, the CEO further stated, “I built my body first and then the gym. I went through the journey myself. As such, I can have consultations with members about their fitness journey, the cost involved, and how long it will take them to get results.” All personal and floor trainers at the gym are professionally trained and are able to impart expert knowledge and give guidance on how to maintain a proper fitness routine.

Body By Kris Fitness Elite also provides changing rooms, private lockers for day use, shower facilities, free web access, towel and water bottle services and much more to ensure the convenience of all members.

Being a stand-alone fitness centre has made the journey of Body By Kris Fitness Elite even more inspiring. This year the fitness centre launched a Healthy Living 2013 initiative, endeavouring to promote a more holistic approach to health and fitness by encouraging members to take better overall care of themselves. They work with Lanka Hospitals, and other health care service providers to offer their members exclusive privileges and benefits from a range of health care and beauty services. In line with the Healthy Living 2013 initiative, Body By Kris Fitness Elite also launched Body Fuel, a range of healthy snacks,

natural spring water, products and 'Body Wear', a line of unisex clothing.

"There Is No Magic Pill Or Equipment. Consistency And Hard Work Will Give You Results"

Creating a place where people can interact comfortably while helping each other has driven to establish Body By Kris as a place where people from any background can come to focus on their fitness goals. "Sometimes the wealthiest people want to go to a gym where they can see the youth and the energy that is priceless," said the CEO revealing the intention behind creating such a space. "Because they know that the future is there and seeing the youth working hard, they are motivated to accomplish their goals." Furthermore, Kris is trying to generate a gym that focuses on providing realistic fitness goals for its members and delivering results. "There is no magic pill or equipment. Consistency and hard work will give you results. We focus on how we can motivate people to come to the gym more often and make fitness part of their lives. Fitness gave me everything I have." The Body By Kris Fitness Elite mission is to create the desire within each individual to realise their own potential through living with fitness. Fitness is all I know and even if one person can achieve their goals that would be good," he concluded.

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