



Melissa Hall has appeared on the cover of numerous fitness magazines including Oxygen Fitness Magazine and Natural Muscle.

GettingFit

with Former Ms. Bikini USA

By Alison McNelis

Brains and beauty are two words rarely associated with each other. In fact, it is often assumed that attractive women lack any intelligence. However, when PhillyFIT came across former Miss Bikini Universe, Melissa Hall, it was refreshing to meet a bright woman who doesn't rely on looks alone to be successful and who proved the "bratty pageant girl" stereotype to be completely inaccurate.

Hall, thirty four, a former Miss Minnesota, visited the Philadelphia area in order to promote Slendertone, a form of EMS technology that helps to strengthen and build muscles. Hall is also trying to spread her knowledge and dedication to healthy eating and exercising to people all over the country.

Obesity is a condition that runs in Hall's family. Growing up, her twin sister was the tiny one while Hall constantly struggled with her weight. She eventually made the decision to not end up with a lifelong battle with obesity and all the health risks that come along with it. As a dancer and cheerleader, healthy eating habits and a regular exercise routine also seemed like an obvious way to perform better. With this philosophy, one is bound to lose a few pounds. Hall was determined to be more than just a skinny twig. She completely transformed her body to be extremely toned and trim.

Once her body was in top shape, Hall

decided to try out the pageant scene, quite a jump for someone who once struggled with her weight. The media often portrays pageants as breeding grounds for eating disorders and "catty" behavior. Conversely, Hall experienced the exact opposite. While she did encounter some negative people occasionally, pageants actually ended up being a very fun and positive experience. "I've always been a very upbeat person which helped me to deal with the negative people when they came along. I got so many more positive things out of all my pageant experiences," said Hall. Hall has four pageant titles to her name including: Miss Minnesota 97', Ms. Fitness Minnesota, Mrs. Minnesota America 2004, and Ms. Bikini Universe 2005.

Fitness was such an important part of Hall's life that she decided to make a career out of it. She became NESTA certified and works as a personal trainer at the gym she owns with her husband. She works to transform other people's bodies like she was able to do for herself a

few years back. She adheres to a healthy, but not completely restrictive diet, eating every 3-4 hours and being sure to include protein in each meal. While she always watches what she eats, she doesn't cut any particular type of food out of her diet, (how refreshing!). She gets her fill of sweets and french fries on the weekends and then tries to avoid those kinds of foods during the week. "I'm definitely not into fad diets. It's about lifestyle and



Hall at the 2005-06 Ms. Bikini Universe Competition

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being on a consistent plan," commented Hall.

As a trainer, Hall is always motivating other people to lose weight. While surgery is one option for weight loss, she encourages people to give healthy eating and exercise a try before taking such drastic, and in some cases, dangerous measures. "Weight loss is all about commitment and consistency. People trying to lose weight need to map out a plan and set realistic goals," said Hall.

The media is filled with images of women who are painfully thin and do nothing with their lives besides party and walk around looking pretty. It's good to see a positive role model for young girls come along because these days society only glorifies the "party girl."



Alison McNelis is a senior journalism student at Temple University. She is currently the intern at PhillyFIT and is aspiring to someday work for Cosmopolitan.

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