



Photos by Benjamin Margalit/Margalit Studio

**Functions of Life** has about 1,200 members who participate in group classes and personal training. The 10,000 sq ft facility features over 25 classes per week.

No matter what your age, ability, or chosen path, *Functions of Life* can help you to master your personal game—and become a healthier player.

by **KenMcEntee**  
Contributing Writer

The intense activity at *Functions of Life* may evoke images of sports performance training—but with the added element of fun. Owner Mike Soster's mission, he says, is to get his members "back into the game."

"The game," he explains, may refer to athletics. Two torn ACLs, in fact, were instrumental in influencing Mike toward a career in helping people to be healthy, fit, and injury-free.

But the game doesn't always refer to sports.

"For some people, the game is having three kids and having to hustle around with them all the time," Mike explains. "For others, the game is going to work, wanting to be productive without their back hurting all day. Everybody's game is different."

That's why *Functions of Life* offers the flexibility to address a wide range of needs, whether it's weight loss or pain management

through one-on-one personal training, high intensity small group sessions, elite level sports performance training or challenging classes like Cardio Kickboxing, TRX, Kettlebell, and Fitness Boot Camp.

"I love how someone in their 50s can be working out in the same class as our college athletes," Mike says. "They will both get an amazing and effective workout, but in their own ways and within their own capabilities. Our members are made of so many different types of people, anywhere from the hard-working parents and young professionals to varsity athletes and grade-school kids.

## FUNCTIONS OF LIFE

HEALTH PERFORMANCE FITNESS

Our environment is designed to inspire, motivate, and bring out the best in every person who walks in."

Mike learned the relatively unique and creative style of training in San Diego under the direction of world-renowned Todd Durkin, owner of Fitness Quest 10, frequented by superstar world class athletes like Drew Brees, Aaron Rodgers, Shawn Merriman, Kellen Winslow and many more.

"I was lucky to be selected to do an internship there," recalls Mike, a graduate of North Royalton High School.

After serving six years in the U.S. Air Force, he was a student at East Carolina University when he applied for the position.

"I think I was selected because of my military experience," he says. "Working with Todd, I had the opportunity to help train pro athletes. I learned what it takes to be at that championship level and I am

now able to apply that knowledge with local athletes and the 'regular people' here in my hometown, trying to give them the best chance at success in whatever they strive to accomplish."

His work with Todd was an appropriate continuation of his work in the Air Force.

"I scored a perfect score on a fitness test when I was 18," Mike says. "That prompted the Air Force to put me in charge of a fitness program and I had no idea what I was doing. But when the military gives you a job, you do it. It was a big responsibility to take on. If somebody doesn't pass their fitness test, that means they can't make rank. If your belly fat is preventing you from making tech sergeant, that's a big deal."

It was later, at East Carolina, when knee injuries prevented Mike from reaching his goal of making the football team after playing semi-pro for 3 years in Japan.

"I don't think I got the right therapy after I tore my ACL the first time, which may be why it happened again," he says. "That motivated me to do something to help other people in the same situation."

## "We don't have a monthly membership fee."

Following his internship in San Diego, Mike went to the California University of Pennsylvania, where he earned a Master of Science degree with a concentration in human performance and injury prevention in 2010. Shortly after, he launched his big training plan right here in Northeast Ohio. "Many fitness guys looking to make it big would leave Cleveland for Chicago or LA. But these are my people so I'm here for good," insists Mike.

Functions of Life now has about 1,200 members who participate in group classes

and personal training sessions. The facility features over 25 classes focused on everything from fat loss and weight management to muscular strength and sports performance. Popular classes include Fitness Boot Camp, Youth Strength and Speed, Cardio Kickboxing, TRX, Kettlebell, and Boxing Conditioning. All classes can be utilized by the whole family from buying a single package for a reasonable rate.

"We don't have a monthly membership fee," he emphasizes. "The flexibility of paying for what you use is perfect for families with busy schedules. When you have kids in multiple activities it's hard to be obligated to be at the gym at a certain time on certain days."

At *Functions of Life*, a member can simply go online, register for a class, and then show up ready to go. "We often have adult classes and kids classes going on simultaneously in different parts of the facility, which also makes it easy for families to schedule workout time together," Mike says.

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**Functions of Life** offers classes for young athletes including Youth Fitness Adventure (ages 6-12) and Youth Strength and Speed (Ages 12-17).



The kid’s workouts, he advises, are decidedly more intense than a school gym class.

“We have kids as young as 6 years old doing military style drills, and loving it,” he says, “It’s like we’re really serious for about 5-10 minutes at a time, then we laugh about it. We do obstacle courses, complex relays, tire flipping, sled pushing, and games like dodgeball. The idea is to trick them into loving the hard-work of it all and showing them how to truly discover their own toughness. Now that’s how you make good athletes.”

Mike says trainers Dominic LaGreca and Joe Mazzone are the “best around.”

“I was lucky to bring them here,” Mike says. “They are passionate about what they do, and, most importantly, they have a knack for relating well to people. All the textbook certifications in the world don’t mean a thing if you don’t love to work with people and want to commit yourself to help them reach their personal goals.”

*You can find more information about Functions of Life by visiting [functionsoflife.com](http://functionsoflife.com). Functions of Life*

*is located at 10155 Broadview Road, Suite 5, in Broadview Heights. You can call the facility at 216-785-5433.*



Mike Soster’s *Functions of Life* offers the flexibility to address personal goals, whether through one-one-one personal training sessions or through its wide range of challenging group classes, like Kickboxing, TRX, or Fitness Boot Camp.

**Open House!** You can find out more about *Functions of Life* at a special Open House on Sunday, August 30th from 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. Along with refreshments, entertainment, tours, and equipment tryouts, the event will feature the gym’s trainers in a dunk tank. You can visit Facebook page, Functions of Life - Fitness and Performance, for more details.