

# The Stow Paper

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## Stow Trainer Fits Fitness In

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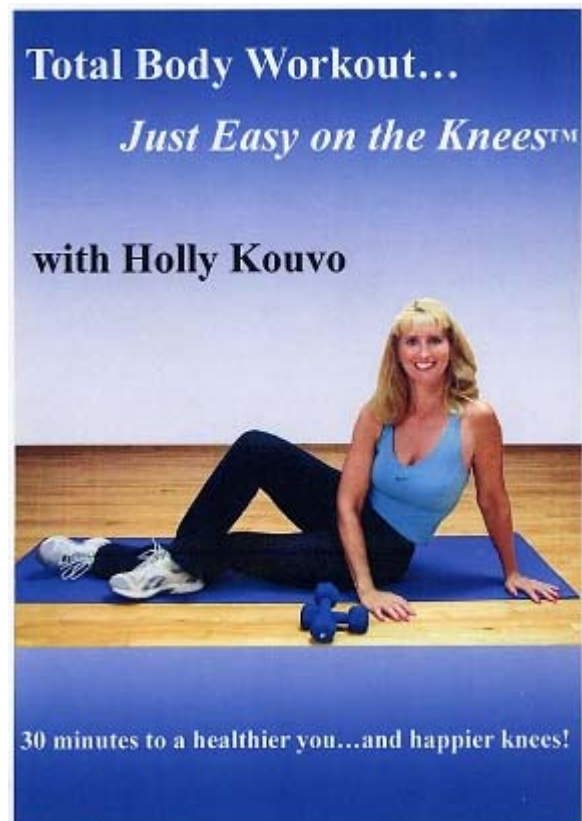
Ailing and failing knees were the foremost problem area for her middle-aged clients, so Stow personal trainer Holly Kouvo created an exercise DVD aimed at strengthening and conditioning the knees so her clients could continue on a path toward success and fulfillment of their weight loss and fitness goals. "A lot of my clients need to lose 100 pounds or more and they're having great success, but a real trouble area for them is the knees. If you can strengthen all the muscles around the knees, you will see great results in two to three weeks." The Total Body Workout...Just Easy on the Knees™ is the first in her series of The Easy On™ videos, with the next two focusing on the lower back and the shoulders, enabling people to continue with a workout regimen that is not hindered by weakness or pain in these areas.

As the founder and owner of Stow-based Fitting Fitness In, a local fitness company which offers private and group personal training services, Kouvo has melded her 24 years of fitness industry experience with eighteen years as a software consultant to build a thriving business with clients nationwide. The company serves twenty customers in Stow and sixty in the surrounding towns. Her first DVD, The Total Body Workout...Just Easy on the Knees™ is an easy-to-follow, 30-minute program, that requires no exercise equipment.

"I developed this series to make it easy for people to exercise while protecting the most vulnerable body parts," says Kouvo. "The Easy On™ for knees is our debut DVD, and the next one will be for the lower back. The key to success when you have a problem with a certain body part is to strengthen the surrounding muscles, and these target how to do it." Kouvo's company creates work out programs for individuals, couples, or small groups and usually presents them in the client's home setting, away

from the public exposure that keeps many people away from the gym and health clubs. The workouts are geared to the specific fitness goals of the individual as well as his or her lifestyle.

"I'm a working Mom too, and I know how hard it is to make time for fitness. If it takes more than a half hour, it's not going to happen," she said. With this in mind, her 30-minute workouts are designed to be effective and get results. She also teaches weight loss clinics and weight loss boot camps at Harvard Ridge Swim Club and Stage Door Dance Theater in Marlborough.



### **Not All Calories Are Created Equal**

Kouvo's fitness philosophy blends together proper nutrition and exercise, which, according to Kouvo, create a healthy lifestyle that makes it easy to become fit and stay that way, without adhering to a strict fad diet. "I really think that Diet is a four-letter word," she said. A Certified Nutritional Specialist, Kouvo helps her clients learn how to make healthy choices and be aware of portion sizes and the different types of calories found in foods. "In our Picture Perfect Weight Loss program, we teach people to understand the differences in foods, though the calories may be the same. A sugar free, fat free muffin has 700 calories, and is probably not very satisfying. You can also get 700 calories by eating a whole pineapple, ½ a cantaloupe, 2 whole wheat rolls, a cup of grapes, ½ a kiwi and a whole apple. We're showing them that all calories are not equal, so just counting calories alone is not the way to go."

### **Motivation For Success**

"Sometimes people just need to see exercise in a different way, to get them going," Kouvo said. Rather than telling someone to walk two miles a day, she gives them a pedometer and tells them to record 4,000 steps a day, the equivalent of two miles. She also dismisses the concept that walking for exercise must be done in a long, concentrated period of time at a fast pace. "You can walk seriously for 10 minutes, three times a day, and have the same effect, or just start out by using the pedometer."

As for nutrition, Kouvo makes it easy by providing her clients with a portion control dish that is the size of the recommended serving for healthy eating. No more measuring, weighing or guessing about food control.

Fitting Fitness In even has nationwide clients which may be a bit difficult to fathom as Kouvo specializes in at-home sessions and one-to-one motivation. "We have virtual clients whom we have never met who have found our website or heard about us through word of mouth. They are all over

the country," she said. "We talk with them on the telephone and then create an exercise and nutritional program just for them. They keep a log of the exercise routine as well as their food intake and send it back to us and then we discuss the results. We had a woman in Virginia who was going into the [military] service and had 2-3 months to get in shape and reach the goals she had set and she did it all through our virtual program."

Kouvo, a parent of two young girls, encourages all families to focus more on fitness and overall nutrition. "Parents can really set an example. If the kids see you exercising and eating healthy, that philosophy will be communicated to them, It's OK to have pizza once a week, but pay attention to what you are doing the rest of the time." Kouvo even has plans for an exercise DVD geared toward children as part of the The Easy On™ series.

Her current DVD is available for sale at Video Signals in Stow, Acton and Boxborough and also on the company website at [FittingFitnessIn.com](http://FittingFitnessIn.com).