Personal trainers are a popular option for those seeking a healthy, long life. But it’s no panacea, Dario Pozzi writes for finews.life. The case against cheap excuses.

«I want to lose weight around my mid-section», «I'd like to feel more rested when I wake up in the morning,» «I don't want to be out of breath after I've climbed four flights of stairs,» «I feel embarrassed at the beach,» «I want to live longer».

Those are typical responses when I ask potential clients about their specific goals. As basic as the answers seem, most people are lost when it comes to finding the right measures to reach their goals.

**Enemy #1: Mediocrity**

We always want to be moving forward in life – to keep developing professionally and personally, physically as well as mentally. We want to live a long, good life. We want to banish Public Enemy #1: mediocrity.

Mediocrity is unsuccessful, weak and bereft of talent. We want to avoid it at all costs, and yet most of us are about average. And that average has some weight around its mid-section, has trouble waking up in the morning, feels winded after four flights of stairs, doesn't like how they look in their swimsuit, and lives to an average age.

**Work for Perfect Peach**

Being better than average requires going above and beyond average performance; you won't achieve anything without extraordinary discipline and stamina. Everyone wants «six-pack» abs or a «perfect peach» bottom – but not many are willing to put in the effort necessary to achieve it.

Who incessantly counts their calories, eats protein-dense foods, and regularly lifts weights? Everyone talks about health, but almost no one really takes their own into hand. How many of you, dear reader, have your current blood work to hand? Who knows the appropriate range for key metrics like cholesterol, vitamins, or hormones? Who is in the picture about how effective their liver or their glands are working?

**«Coach» Can't Do the Work**

Of course, coaching can help get you on the right track: a personal trainer can bust the myths
about fad diets, suggest health checks, refer nutrition professionals, and plan effective training sessions. An effective coach wants to make themself obsolete as soon as possible.

What you can't expect your PT to do is to execute any of these changes. He or she cannot transplant discipline into your DNA. Instead of fretting over extra pounds around your hips, you'll need to decide to turn it around and abandon lazy excuses.

«My Genes Work Against Me»

It begins in your mind: your body simply does what your will commands. To be sure, we're a very efficient machine and fat are stupid. Given enough stimulation and proper nutrition, the first grows steadily. The latter will melt without complaint in a calorie deficit. It's not complicated: calories in – calories out!

The litany of, «I follow a diet and exercise regularly – and still don't lose weight. I have the feeling my metabolism is too slow, or my genes are to blame.» All lazy excuses! Have you counted the cocktails you drank during a weekend blow-out, or accounted for the calories when you drench your salad in convenience dressing, or the «splosh» of milk in your coffee? What about the «tiny» piece of chocolate cake after dinner?

Calorie Deficit Essential

These «meaningless» additions to your diet can quickly add up to 400 calories extra per day. For reference, it takes a 75-kilogram man 10,000 steps to work off 400 calories!

«I jog three times a week, plus three interval sessions, and I don't eat carbohydrates at dinner. And I'm actually gaining weight!» The reason is usually simple: too little control over calorie intake.

Some very active people eat too much and end up in calorie surplus. A calorie deficit is vital to lose fat. When you eat carbs, proteins, and fats is inconsequential – a fig isn't more calorie-rich if you eat it at night than it does at breakfast!

**Leyla Hamzi** and **Dario Pozzi** run **Pozzible**, a Zurich-based fitness and nutrition advisory. **Individual training and nutrition plans are the cornerstone of any coaching. Pozzi, who has advised and trained 400 private clients, worked in UBS' asset management arm before becoming a personal trainer.**