



WLC FOR **BUSINESS**
Corporations, Small Business, Non-Profit

DEUCE

WHOLE LIFE CHALLENGE × DEUCE GYM

CASE STUDY

Deuce Gym credits Whole Life Challenge
for changing their community's health
in a meaningful way.

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Not providing a space for people to address every aspect of health and wellness would be a mistake for someone in a position of authority in fitness, and the Whole Life Challenge is a really helpful tool to do that.

-Logan Gelbrich, owner, Deuce Gym

The Numbers

Number of members: ~220

Number of coaches: 7

Market/Industry: Gym/fitness

Year Founded: 2013

City/Location: Venice, California

Members participating in the Whole Life Challenge: 100 in 2019

Number of times played the Challenge: 13

Most recent Challenge played: January 2019



In 2011 Logan Gelbrich was starting out as a trainer, leading group fitness classes in a Santa Monica, California, park. Even in those early days, he used the Whole Life Challenge to help people live healthier lives. When Logan moved his business to Venice, California, opening the doors of Deuce Gym in 2013, the Whole Life Challenge came with him.

Deuce Gym offers a mix of weightlifting, gymnastics, strongman, strength and conditioning, and general physical preparedness classes, but Logan understands that **people need more than a daily workout to change their health in a meaningful way.**

“If we are honest coaches and trainers, we know we are just a small part of a much bigger, more comprehensive life, and so the Whole Life Challenge quite simply makes us look good,” Logan said.

“The lifestyle aspects of the Whole Life Challenge are the things that we all really want from ourselves anyway,” he said, “and the Challenge provides a context to do that collectively.”

Logan said he notices the atmosphere in the gym changes during the Challenge. **The pre-workout chatter is more connected and inclusive – instead of talking about the weather, people share breakfast recipes or resources for alternative flour.**

“It’s an information-sharing time because it’s a problem-solving time, and everyone is doing that together,” Logan said.

Over the years, Deuce has experimented with different ways of running the Challenge in the gym, which they host every January.

This year Logan decided to add a new twist.



In 2019 Logan challenged each of his seven coaches to create their own Whole Life Challenge “sub team” under the umbrella of the main Deuce team. The coaches competed to see who could get the biggest, most engaged team. The gym members were able to pick which team they joined, so the coaches offered things like extra training or weekly FaceTime calls to incentivize people.

This new element involved Logan’s staff in the friendly competition while creating an opportunity for them to build relationships with the members. “It made them have some skin in the game,” Logan said.

Juan Luis Guadarrama has been a coach at Deuce since 2014. **He felt that adding the coach-led sub teams increased overall enrollment and investment in the Challenge.**

In these small, coach-led teams, members received individual attention to help them meet their goals. They were accountable to both their team leader and their fellow team members, which helped with motivation and engagement.

“I gave people extra workouts,” Juan said about the benefits he gave to his team members, “and I even offered to go to people’s houses and throw out their bad food ... although nobody took me up on that,” he said, laughing.

The trainers at Deuce talk about the importance of nutrition, stretching, and hydration year round, but when people leave the gym their busy lives often get in the way, and they have trouble following through. **The Whole Life Challenge provides a structure for people to think about these healthy habits outside the gym.**

Juan said the Challenge helps him communicate the importance of overall health to his students.

“These (habits) are things you need to do all the time – health is not just about squats,” Juan said. “(The WLC is) a more direct platform to be like ‘Hey guys, this is what we talk about all the time, but here are the actual go-to action items that you need to do in order to play.’”



Houman Shekarchi joined Deuce in 2017, but that year he says he only went to the gym about ten times. Houman increased his attendance in 2018, coming in about two or three times a month, but he still struggled to establish consistent healthy nutrition and exercise habits. An editor and producer in the television industry, Houman works long hours, often winding down with a few glasses of whisky a night and frequently staying up until 2:00am.

When he heard about the Whole Life Challenge, Houman was excited about the game aspect and the structure, but he was worried he wouldn't be able to follow through for six weeks. Prior to the Whole Life Challenge, Houman said he never kept a journal or paid attention to his water intake. However, Houman was **surprised to find that the daily reflections, score keeping, and support of the coaches and members at Deuce made the process easy.**

"When you are surrounded by people who are living what they say, and what they want other people to do, that's all the motivation you need. You see people doing it. And you're like, 'Well if they are doing it, then there's no reason I shouldn't be doing it,'" Houman said.

Houman signed for Coach Juan's specialty weightlifting course, held twice a week at 6:00 am. Getting up at 5:00 am was a huge change for Houman, a lifelong night owl, but making this shift showed him he was capable of change.

Next, Houman began prepping his food for the week on Sunday and started tidying up his house every week, an early well-being habit he maintained throughout the Challenge.



As he focused on each of the 7 Daily Habits, Houman began to notice some profound changes. He'd struggled with depression most of his adult life, but when he began eating well, sleeping well, and exercising consistently, he felt the depression lift.

"It was a welcome change to start seeing it and feeling it," Houman said about the change in his mental health. "I put everything aside and bought into the whole thing. If you want it to work, it will work," he said.

Once the Challenge ended, Houman continued many of his new healthy habits. He asked his boss if he could start work at 8:00 am instead of 10:00 am so he can attend a 5:30 pm class at Deuce five days a week. The early start to the day means he goes to bed earlier, and he's made a commitment to drink alcohol only on Friday and Saturday nights.

For Houman, the game aspect of the Whole Life Challenge helped him embrace these new habits and commit more fully to a healthy life.



Deuce ends each Whole Life Challenge with an awards ceremony, giving out prizes for the top scores, most improved, and a “Spirit of the Challenge” award to the person who best embodies the intention behind building lifelong healthy habits.

Logan cultivates an inclusive, celebratory vibe at the awards ceremony, complete with a podium and an oversized, laminated Whole Life Challenge check for the winner. “People are presented awards in a championship-type event, but based on life change,” Logan said.

To his surprise, Houman had the top score of the 2019 Whole Life Challenge at Deuce Gym. “I had no plan to win. I just started going more regularly. I had more interactions with people at the gym. I was happy to do it and be a part of it,” Houman said.

The Whole Life Challenge is a revenue stream for Deuce, but more importantly **it creates a sense of community, which improves member retention and satisfaction.**

The Whole Life Challenge is an inclusive, fun way for members to address habits that might be preventing them from reaching their goals. Gyms thrive when members are engaged and successful, and happy members keep coming back—and are more likely to recommend the gym to their friends.

“The Whole Life Challenge creates awareness and accountability throughout the whole community,” Juan said.

As a busy gym owner and entrepreneur, Logan appreciates that the Whole Life Challenges removes the administrative hassle that comes with running a homegrown nutrition or lifestyle challenge.

“The Whole Life Challenge gives us the freedom and latitude to get down to coaching and the role that we serve, rather than become coders for six weeks,” Logan said.

“You just can’t do it better on your own,” he said.



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For more information...

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