



BRAZILIAN GYMNASTICS FEDERATION

FUN, FUNDAMENTALS, FRIENDSHIP, AND FITNESS: REFLECTIONS ON BEING FIT AND HEALTHY IN GYMNASTICS FOR ALL

Matheus Agnez de Oliveira

Filipe Alves Noé

Mauricio Santos Oliveira

Group: Grupo Ginástico Ânima UNICAMP

According to the International Gymnastics Federation (FIG, 2009), Gymnastics for All (GFA) can be understood as an inclusive form of gymnastic that is suitable for individuals of all ages, both genders, different skill levels, and coming from different cultures. Conforming the organization, GFA has the potential to contribute to the maintenance of health, the enhancement of physical fitness, and the improvement and preservation of physical, social, intellectual, and psychological well-being of its practitioners. It is important to highlight that FIG, through the GFA Committee, aims to foster union among nations through a global movement to promote physical activity with the aim of contributing to health, the development of physical fitness, and the establishing of friendship between people. In order to catalyze the fulfillment of these objectives, we can implement GFA based on the philosophy of 4Fs, proposed by Russell (2014), which are: **F**un; **F**itness; **F**undamentals; and **F**riendship. The accomplishment of this philosophy has the potential to provide complete development of individuals who practice GFA. In this sense, when we reflect on physical development, Russell (2010) mentions that the maintaining of a certain level of intensity in the proposed activities to gymnasts, with adequate stimuli, we can contribute to the process of adaptation of their bodies. Thus, not only make them healthier, but also able to succeed outside the sports context. In addition, GFA can be understood as the basis for other gymnastic disciplines (RUSSELL, 2014), and the enhancement of physical fitness will allow GFA practitioners to succeed in any form of gymnastics or sport that they choose in future. Beyond these aspects, we can also encourage through GFA the acquisition of healthy habits, and persuade the importance of being physical active for life. The Gymnastics Group Meraki, located



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at the Center for Physical Education and Sports of the Federal University of Espírito Santo, aims to provide to undergraduate and graduate students in Physical Education the opportunity to practice GFA. And also to extend their pedagogical practice related to gymnastics disciplines based on the assumption that students' experience of teaching and learning about gymnastics could make their professional training more solid. In addition, the participation as gymnasts can contribute to the acquisition of healthy habits that will hang for life, such as regular practice of physical exercise. The group consists of 30 students, between 18 and 27 years old, who practice this discipline three times a week, totaling six hours a week. The practice of GFA in Gymnastic Group Meraki follow the 4Fs philosophy and, with regard to physical fitness, we develop training according to the proposal of Russell (2014) that divides Fitness in 4Ss, which are: Stamina, Strength, Speed strength, and Suppleness. Furthermore, GFA has the potential to develop motor components of physical fitness, such: agility, balance, coordination, and spatial orientation (RUSSELL, 2010). As stated by Toledo, Tsukamoto and Carbinatto (2016), GFA is based on gymnastic movements of different disciplines, with the possibility of inclusion of official or alternative apparatus, which can be integrated with other forms of corporal expressions. And during training, choreography performance, and experiences, we observe that levels of physical fitness are important for learning and performing the elements, as well as for the prevention of injuries. As reported by Russell (2010), if gymnasts develop an adequate physical fitness, the process of learning gymnastic elements will be facilitated. We observe that the GFA practice, inserted in the philosophy of the 4Fs proposed by Russell (2014), which is implemented in Gymnastic Group Meraki, has allowed gymnasts to reach their potential in gymnastics respecting their individualities, and also contributed to the maintenance of their health.

Keywords: Gymnastics; Gymnastics Group; Fitness.