



NETWORK

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF AUSTRALIAN FITNESS NETWORK

SPRING 2020

Making it on your own with a group fitness business **10**

Practical considerations for better virtual training **17**

Network meets Sam Wood **26**

Is your pregnant client holding her breath? **36**

Nurturing collaborative relationships with clients **51**

The 5 things you can do to own your niche **65**

TRAINING CLIENTS SAFELY, AT HOME & IN-CLUB

PLUS

- ▶ Learn & earn with your FREE CEC or CPD **32**
- ▶ Suunto Sportswatch, food processor & more to be WON! **35**

CORRECTIVE
EXERCISE
SPECIALIST

ALMOST **90%** OF YOUR CLIENTS WILL SUFFER FROM RECURRING **MUSCLE AND JOINT PAIN!**

This affects their ability to exercise effectively and, ultimately, your business success.

SAVE
40%

SAVE 40% on Corrective Exercise Specialist courses from The BioMechanics Method between 21 September - 3 October.

Network Members login to the Network site to automatically receive your discount at checkout between 21 September - 3 October 2020 (non-members use code BIO40 to save on standard non-member rates)

With the number of adults suffering from chronic pain projected to almost double by 2050, it's never been more important for personal trainers to understand how to help clients move correctly and without pain.

Australian Fitness Network has partnered with one of the world's foremost experts in musculoskeletal assessment and corrective exercise, Justin Price, to bring you The BioMechanics Method Corrective Exercise Trainer Certification.

ENROL TODAY AND LEARN HOW TO:

- ▶ Safely conduct an array of musculoskeletal assessments
- ▶ Alleviate pain caused by common muscle and movement imbalances
- ▶ Design corrective exercise programs that will have clients feeling better fast.

PLUS – you'll also have access to an entire corrective exercise library!



[CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS AND TO GET STARTED](#)

Waiting, innovating and creating our way out of crisis



Welcome to your spring *Network* magazine. We had all hoped that by the time this season arrived we'd be living in post-COVID conditions, but as the situation evolves, it has become apparent that there may be no such thing, perhaps just post-peak conditions. Our entire industry has been dramatically impacted, but our thoughts are particularly with our Victorian members, friends and colleagues who continue to suffer the greatest restrictions to their businesses. Wherever you are based, and whatever the nature of your fitness business, we hope that you've been able to adapt and continue operating, even if to a lesser extent.

Naturally, the pandemic continues to weave its way through assorted features in this issue. In his Perspective opinion piece on page 7, Ryan Hogan, CEO of Les Mills Asia Pacific, discusses the hybrid model of virtual/actual sessions that our industry needs to adopt, while on page 17 Guillaume Tual looks at some of the practicalities of delivering online exercise prescription and correction.

In her feature on page 10, Kirsty Nield shares how the sudden club closure by her long-term employer led her to launch her own group fitness business. Her experience started pre-coronavirus, but the lessons she learnt hold great value for those who now find themselves unable to instruct classes at their previous places of employment. It's a genuinely inspiring example of necessity being the mother of invention.

We also look at tactics for managing restrictions in aqua classes with Claire Barker-Hemings on page 41, and tips for making mask-wearing in gyms an effective rather than merely symbolic exercise on page 44.

Rest assured though, it's not all virus-related content. Elsewhere, you'll find features on corrective exercises for back pain, breath-focused training for pregnant clients, and how to build collaborative relationships that strengthen both your client's goal ownership, and their training outcomes. And remember, you can earn a CEC/CPD for reading some of these, so check out page 32 for details.

All the best for a brighter Spring

Oliver Kitchingman, Editor
editor@fitnessnetwork.com.au



NETWORK'S CORE PURPOSE

'To inform, inspire and educate our members to be the best they can be'

ABN 36 624 043 367

NETWORK MAGAZINE

Editor, Oliver Kitchingman

Network magazine is the official quarterly publication of Australian Fitness Network. It is distributed in March, June, September and December. While every effort is made to ensure accuracy, Australian Fitness Network accepts no responsibility for the correctness of any facts or opinions. All information including prices (quoted in AUD) is correct at time of publishing, but may be subject to change. Where CECs are stated, they may only be applicable within Australia. We welcome articles from all industry professionals on the understanding that the author ensures the work they submit is their own. No material in *Network* magazine may be reproduced in any form without the written consent of the publisher. © 2020 All material copyright to Australian Fitness Network. All rights reserved.

ADVERTISING

For information on advertising in *Network* magazine, direct email marketing, or through *Network's* social media and other online options, please email editor@fitnessnetwork.com.au, call 02 8412 7486 or click [HERE](#).

COMPETITION TERMS & CONDITIONS

Unless otherwise specified, all competitions/giveaways contained in this issue commence on 15 September 2020 and conclude on 31 October 2020. Each competition is a game of skill and chance plays no part in determining the winner. The judge's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Winners will be selected by the editor and will be notified by email no later than 7 November 2020. Click [HERE](#) for full Terms and Conditions.

AUSTRALIAN FITNESS NETWORK

Post: Ground Floor, 87 Marsden St,
Parramatta NSW 2150
Ph: 1300 493 832 (local call rate)
Ph: 02 8412 7400
Web: fitnessnetwork.com.au
E-mail: info@fitnessnetwork.com.au

fb.me/ozfitnetwork
 twitter.com/ozfitnetwork
 [ozfitnetwork](https://www.instagram.com/ozfitnetwork)



Your Network Membership provides you with access to 8 CECs or 1 PDP annually at no extra cost.

THE NETWORK TEAM

We love hearing from our Members. Get in touch using the details below.

Editor: Oliver Kitchingman
editor@fitnessnetwork.com.au, 02 8412 7486

Graphic Designer: Jack Lee, Novu Creative,
hello@novu.com.au, 0466 426 649

Membership Consultant: Chloe Wilson
info@fitnessnetwork.com.au, 02 8412 7402

Accounts: Accounts Team
accounts@fitnessnetwork.com.au

**FITNESS PROFESSIONAL
INSURANCE FROM GALLAGHER**

LEADING THE WAY



DOES YOUR INSURANCE REALLY COVER YOU?



Do you know what your fitness professional insurance policy (your public liability and professional indemnity) covers you for?

If you ever train clients using deadlifts, for example, you may find that your insurance wouldn't cover you in case of legal action resulting from injury.

Fitness Professional Insurance from Gallagher is created by industry experts who understand modern personal training and constantly review the policy to ensure it meets the needs of today's PTs.

Covers PTs for what PTs actually do.

[CLICK HERE TO GET COVERED](#)

1300 493 832 | [FITNESSNETWORK.COM.AU/FITNESS-INSURANCE](https://fitnessnetwork.com.au/fitness-insurance)



Authorised representative # 377634



AFSL # 238312

Australian Fitness Network is an Authorised Representative of Arthur J. Gallagher & Co (Aus) Limited (AJG)

CONTENTS

SPRING 2020

- 7 Perspective: Our industry's state of play by *Ryan Hogan*
- 8 Industry Insight
- 10 Making it on your own with a group fitness business by *Kirsty Nield*
- 15 A personal sponsor could be the key to your career growth by *Janine Garner*
- 17 Practical considerations for better virtual training by *Guillaume Tual*
- 21 Injury & Rehab: When lower back pain is not a lower back problem by *Justin Price* CEC ARTICLE
- 26 Network meets Sam Wood, PT & women's health ambassador
- 29 Research Review: The Earth is not flat! (and your treadmill needn't be either) by *Dr Mike Climstein & Dr Joe Walsh* CEC ARTICLE
- 32 Earn your FREE CEC or CPD
- 33 Info handout: The training benefits of cutting back the booze by *Laura Bajurny*



10



17



26



41



36



29

- 34 Network Community & Competitions
- 36 Is your pregnant client holding her breath? by *Dianne Edmonds* CEC ARTICLE
- 41 Stay in your lane! Physical distancing in the pool by *Claire Barker-Hemings* CEC ARTICLE
- 44 Best practice for wearing facemasks in gyms by *Vincent Candrawinata*
- 47 This was GX in lockdown by *Lianne Tiemens & Dominic Gili*
- 51 Walk together – nurturing collaborative relationships with clients by *Susy Natal* CEC ARTICLE
- 56 Real World PT: Alana Coomer
- 58 The realities of club reopening by *Leisl Klaebe*
- 61 Listen up! Latest podcast roundup
- 62 Recipes: Baked ricotta salad & Coconut sorbet by *Teresa Cutter, The Healthy Chef*
- 65 The 5 things you can do to own your niche by *Nicola Moras*
- 69 NZ News
- 70 Network Catalogue

44



62





ENHANCE CLIENT VITALITY, FUNCTION AND STRENGTH WITH ViPR



Australian Fitness Network now delivers official ViPR training courses online, with special rates for Network Members.

Combining full-body movement with load, ViPR enhances the Vitality, Performance and Reconditioning goals of clients.

ViPR's concept of Loaded Movement Training (LMT) fuses task-oriented movement patterning with resistance training to deliver real functionality and strength.

Choose from these ViPR courses or bundle them for the best value.

\$299 / 5

for Network Members / CECs/CPDs

ENROL HERE!

Loaded Movement Training 1 & 2

Provides PTs with an introduction to the fundamental principles of Loaded Movement Training (LMT) and exercises that make up the foundational drills of all ViPR programs, PLUS exploration of ViPR methodology, program design and implementation, and skills progression.

\$99 / 3

for Network Members / CECs/CPDs

ENROL HERE!

ViPR Active Ageing

This intermediate-level course provides trainers with a specialist skillset needed to enhance the lives of older adults, by following Loaded Movement Training principles and core ViPR exercises.

\$99 / 2

for Network Members / CECs/CPDs

ENROL HERE!

ViPR Kids

This specialist intermediate-level course provides trainers with the know-how to apply the fundamental principles of Loaded Movement Training and core exercises of ViPR programs with kids aged 4-15.

**GROUP
RATES
AVAILABLE**



EMAIL info@fitnessnetwork.com.au TO ENQUIRE

CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS AND TO GET STARTED



ISOLATION HIGHLIGHTS POWER OF GROUP CONNECTION

BOTH REAL AND VIRTUAL

We need to not only provide safe exercise environments, but also integrate virtual training into our offerings so that our services are not at the mercy of bricks and mortar restrictions, writes CEO of Les Mills Asia Pacific, *Ryan Hogan*.

In February this year (which feels like a decade ago) I was to attend a large-scale instructor event in South East Asia that got cancelled at the last minute due to supply chain challenges out of China, brought on by something distant and far away called the 'coronavirus'. Regardless, I went on the trip to visit customers and colleagues in the region. On the way back, in Singapore airport, I found myself wondering 'Where is everybody?', as business travel had begun a swift slowdown as concern – and the virus – started to spread.

Upon returning to Australia things seemed to be ticking along normally with scarce concern for what appeared to be contained overseas. And then, over the coming weeks the entire world was turned upside down. I'm sure none of us will ever forget where we were the night of Sunday 22 March, when Scott Morrison announced that our industry (along with most of the rest of the economy) had to close down indefinitely.

The following months were undoubtedly some of the most uncertain the fitness industry, not to mention humanity, has faced. We were told we had to isolate and avoid groups, and that this behaviour may need to continue for the foreseeable future. As social beings, and as an industry built off the back of bringing groups together, there was a large question mark over what our future may hold. For those of us that have invested our entire lives (and livelihoods) in the fitness industry, the lack of certainty was daunting.

What became very apparent though, was that as an industry we are capable of quickly adapting. This period will almost certainly be remembered as the moment the fitness

industry embraced digital, as clubs and instructors quickly learnt how to livestream classes and personal trainers figured out how to train their clients via Zoom. Big brand content suppliers who already had a digital platform to deliver workouts naturally saw an explosion of demand for their services, in some cases reporting growth in the hundreds of percentage points. What this showed us is that consumer demand for our industry's products and services was strong, it was just a matter for us to figure out how to deliver them in this new world.

When clubs and facilities started to reopen around the world, what also became apparent was that the social stickiness of gathering and exercising in groups was something that our customers had missed. As a category, group exercise performed better than most, with studios booked out full of members thankful to see their favourite instructor teaching their favourite class. And for those that did come back to their gyms, the realisation that working out in a group in a dedicated facility was so much better than doing the same at home, was almost universal.

It would be dishonest of me to conclude this piece by stating that our industry has been through its worst days, as the reality is still uncertain. As I write this, in late August 2020, Melbourne is in lockdown, three major countries in Asia are still shut and the virus is still raging around parts of the globe. What I am certain of is that the role of exercise in preventative health and a strong immune system has never been more obvious or important.


To ensure group exercise, and the wider fitness industry, remain relevant, we



must provide safe environments for our customers, while also embracing the digital revolution so that our services are not restricted to our bricks and mortar locations.

Those that get it right stand to reap the rewards of a society that will, hopefully, have health and a strong immune system as key priorities for the future. **N**

Ryan Hogan, BCom

The CEO of Les Mills Asia Pacific, Ryan is a senior and strategic executive who specialises in driving organisational culture, change management, strategy development and growth. A thought provoking and engaging public speaker, Ryan has also presented numerous times at conferences and events around the world. 

Les Mills workouts are licensed by over 20,000 clubs in over 100 countries, with more than 140,000 accredited Instructors delivering group workouts to over seven million participants weekly.

INDUSTRY INSIGHT

| News, views and lessons learnt

LIGHT AT END OF TUNNEL FOR VIC CLUBS AND STUDIOS

Melbourne-based gyms and fitness facilities will be able to reopen from Monday 26 October, with certain restrictions in place, provided certain targets are met, while regional Victorian facilities may be able to reopen earlier, subject to targets and public health advice.

The confirmation followed the controversial 6 September roadmap announcement by Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews, which did not provide clarity on the dates and restrictions for the industry to reopen.

Fitness Australia CEO Barrie Elvish said 'This week Fitness Australia has received confirmation that fitness facilities and gyms in metro Melbourne will be able to open with set restrictions from Monday 26 October provided trigger points are met, while other areas of Victoria may be able to open earlier if trigger points are achieved.'

'Although the restrictions are still to be determined, Fitness Australia also welcomed the verbal confirmation we received that the industry will be engaged to develop protocols and procedures for reopening and we are looking forward to working with the Victorian Government in coming weeks.'

'We know gyms can open and operate safely with a robust COVID-Safe plan in place. We have successfully achieved this in Queensland with the endorsement and state-wide implementation of a



Fitness Australia-led Fitness Industry COVID Safe Plan and need to make this a priority in Victoria.'

Elvish said that with job losses and uncertainty impacting the mental and physical health of Victorians during isolation, getting people back to the gym safely to resume an exercise routine was essential.

'Fitness facilities and gyms are an essential service and we cannot underestimate the vital role they play in managing and maintaining mental health, physical health and wellbeing' he said.

Source: Fitness Australia



SQUAT'S ALL THAT ABOUT?

We know that active wear has gone gangbusters in recent years (and that wearing it doesn't necessarily indicate any intention to be active). For those who do workout in their athleisure gear, however, the sub-genre of 'squat proof leggings' is the latest must-have item for their workout wardrobes, with internet searches for the term having increased by 4,000% over the last five years, according to search trend analysts Exploding Topics.

The propensity for traditional leggings to become transparent when stretched (when squatting for example) created a market for a product that didn't exhibit this unfortunate feature. In fact, *Shape* magazine apparently found that many personal trainers consider 'unwittingly transparent leggings' a serious problem for their clients.

Naturally, a number of active wear brands are now getting on board and adding squat proof lines to their ranges.

Source: Exploding Topics



UNCERTAIN FUTURE FOR THE FITNESS SHOW

The end of July saw the announcement by Reed Exhibitions that, following a thorough and extensive review of their events portfolio globally, they would no longer be presenting The Fitness Show, which has traditionally been held alongside FILEX, the fitness industry convention.

The Fitness Show has been running annually under various names, most notably perhaps The Fitness Expo, and has had various owners since the 1990's.

In a statement, Brian Thomas, Managing Director of Reed Exhibitions Australia, wrote "There is no doubt that The Fitness Shows in Sydney and Melbourne were valued events for the fitness community. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our customers, partners, suppliers and friends within the innovative, vibrant and dynamic fitness industry in Australia. We hope that The Fitness Shows played some small role in bringing the community together and providing a space where long lasting relationships could be formed."

Following the announcement from Reed, the board of the FILEX convention released a statement in which they expressed their wishes for The Fitness Show to continue operating, describing it as 'a vital and much-loved event'.

While it initially sounded as though a number of industry stakeholders were considering options for keeping The Fitness Show running, no further announcements have been made, and the future of the event remains in doubt at this stage.

Source: FILEX Holdings & Reed Exhibitions

The way we were...

As we commemorate 20 years since Sydney hosted the Olympic Games, we thought we'd take a look back at the *Network* magazine covers from that exciting and optimistic time.

January 2000 looked at 'Fitness in 2000' and 'Aqua and safety' (at a time when 'safety' wasn't referring to social distancing, as in this issue's aqua feature on page 41). Elsewhere, Sunrise to Sunset Step got a look-in, as did savvy supplementation.

The rise of mind/body and BODYBALANCE from Les Mill's captured

our attention later that year, as did the emergence of life coaching as an area in which fitness professionals might consider working.

The year of what IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch described as 'the best Olympic Games ever' was also the year we launched fitnessnetwork.com.au, and although in many ways 2020 may not be holding a candle to the year 2000, we're pretty confident that our online presence has evolved for the better!





GROUP FITNESS

MAKING IT ON

YOUR OWN

WITH A GROUP FITNESS BUSINESS

The closure of her long-term employer's club forced GFM *Kirsty Nield* to take a bold leap into the great unknown and set up her own group fitness business.

My local gym first opened in the early 1980s. It was the most up-to-date fitness facility for miles, with a pool, spas, saunas, squash courts, creche and even its own bar. The gym attracted people from far and wide and was known for its community atmosphere, great instructors and welcoming staff. Over the years, the gym adapted and changed. The squash courts were re-purposed to accommodate treadmills, 24-hour access was established, and a budget membership option was introduced. Despite the changes over the years, the gym remained a community hub, a place where people met to exercise and socialise. It was a hugely important part of the local landscape.

The closure of our gym

In December 2019, this gym, the gym I had worked at for 20 years, went into liquidation. One day we were going about our normal business; teaching classes, connecting with our members, and doing what we loved – the next, the doors were shut, the locks were changed, and the liquidators were ready to sell anything possible to pay back creditors.

Being a community gym, the effect this had on the local residents, the members, the staff and the instructors was significant. The closure affected the entire community. There was a huge sense

of loss. Loss of family, loss of friends, loss of income and – most importantly – loss of general and mental health.

With all the changes going on in the world today, this story is, regrettably, not uncommon. The fitness industry is highly competitive, and overheads are high. If not run properly, it can be ridiculously hard for club operators to make ends meet. Add the new pressure a global pandemic has placed on society and, unfortunately, many gyms have had to dramatically change how they operate. Sadly, some have closed their doors and, in many cases, the damage done is too great. Some may never open again.

Despite gyms closing, people still need to exercise, and instructors still want to teach. If you find yourself among those group fitness instructors now finding themselves without work, hopefully my story will inspire you to at least consider alternate employment options that don't require you to hang up your headmic.

The plan

In my case, having been employed at the fitness centre and having an insight into what was happening behind the scenes, I knew the closure was coming. For years I had been wanting to break away from the internal conflict and questionable management style that

was a massive source of stress. For years I had been fantasising about how I would run my own business. I had been preparing for this event for a long time. The gym closing was my trigger to act – and quickly. Yes, the gym doors had closed, but another door was about to open. The difference was, this door was mine and I opened it myself and on my terms.

The right ingredients

Like most passionate group fitness instructors, not being able to teach is not an option. For me, not teaching is like not eating or not breathing. I cannot live without it. While I no longer had the gym, I still had all the other ingredients to make a group fitness business:

- a following – some of my regulars had been attending my classes for years
- ideas – I have skills to teach any kind of class, from HIIT to Pilates
- lack of competition – no other gyms in the area offered group fitness
- experience – I have taught group fitness for 20 years in numerous facilities
- passion – I teach for the love of fitness and my community, not just for the money.

The process

Starting out on my own seemed lonely. I wanted to be able to offer variety and options to the local community, so they did not need to look elsewhere for exercise opportunities. Having been the Group Fitness Manager for many years, I had good connections and friendships with the instructors. So, on the day the gym closed, I announced to the team that I intended to put together a timetable of classes. I didn't specifically invite individuals to join me, I waited to see who was passionate and dedicated enough to ask to be involved.

I ended up with a team of six. We had a great range of skills, from yoga to HIIT and everything in between. We are all versatile freestyle instructors with the skills to appeal to all ages and abilities.

Of the six, I had two amazing, talented, and hugely important friends who helped drive the set-up of a new group fitness studio. Together, we were the 'founding instructors' of the business and we worked incredibly hard to get things up and running.

With a few quick meetings, group chats and many frantic phone calls, we had put together a short-term timetable of 36 classes over two weeks. The gym closed on a Friday. The following Monday night, we held our first class for 40 people in a local dance studio.

The first few months are now a bit of a blur. In an effort to find venues that could

accommodate our class times, we ended up with seven different locations in which we held our classes. These included:

- a basketball court at the local Rec centre
- two church halls
- a Freemasons hall
- a dance studio
- two community centres

To say our timetable was complicated is an understatement. In addition, we were all operating individually. Some instructors were only accepting casual payments from people, while others were selling multi-class passes. It's amazing the members ever knew where to go and how to pay! Despite this, classes were well attended and quite profitable. Things seemed to be going well.

Changes for greater success

Then, in March 2020, it all ground to a halt. COVID-19 struck our state and all fitness facilities – and venues that doubled as them – were closed. Despite gyms being forced into lockdown, I was busier than ever. During the shutdown, I continued to teach regular classes using live streaming on Facebook. I made this available to all our members at no charge. While the loss of income was difficult, I felt it was important to keep my connection to the members we had built up over the past three months. I hoped that if I kept them engaged and connected to me, they would return to my business when we re-opened for face-to-face classes.

In addition, with support and advice from my two co-founding instructors, I used the time in lockdown to re-assess how the

business was operating. There were two main changes I knew needed to be made: reducing the number of venues, and having one class rate and payment system for all classes. I wanted the business to have a professional appearance and membership options that were affordable and easy to understand for all participants. However, due to the high-risk nature of the fitness industry, as experienced with the old centre, I wanted to keep overheads low. For our return after the COVID lockdown, I made a number of important improvements.

Location consolidation

Our seven venues were reduced to two. This meant some of the classes needed to be dropped and in some cases I had to push instructors out on their own. All weekday classes are now at one venue and all weekend classes are at another. This makes it much simpler for members.

Low rent

Rent is paid to the venues on a per class basis. This means we only pay for what we use. We have no hidden bills such as utilities, building insurance or cleaning. This is all covered in our room hire.

Class passes

Participants can now purchase 10-visit class passes, with the passes able to be used for any type of class. A class is crossed off each time they attend a session, meaning participants pay for what they use. This change prompted us to professionalise our accounting and have one bank account into which all membership payments were deposited.



Image courtesy Cath Leo Photos



THE QUICK READ

- Loss of teaching opportunities through previous employers need not necessarily result in the end of your group fitness career
- If the demand exists and you have a following of regular participants, the skills to teach a range of classes and a passion for group fitness, you may be well placed to start your own business
- Either on your own, or with fellow instructors, establish a timetable that meets the needs of your loyal participants
- To keep overheads low, try to rent local venues, such as church and community halls, by the hour so you only pay for the time you are delivering classes
- Going it alone is not for everybody, but if a market exists and you follow strategies to keep costs low, you can create a viable group fitness business.

Low membership costs

While I did not want to de-value the amazing service we were providing for our members, I knew we still had to compete with the large fitness centres. These offer many more services, including treadmills, weight machines, showers and cafes. We had to ensure that if people attended two to three classes per week, the cost for them would be less than, or similar to, the cost of a standard gym membership.

Money in the bank

I restructured the cost per class to allow a percentage to remain in the bank. This allows the business to have a kitty which can pay for promotions, equipment, and other overheads.

Instructor requirements

While I have been responsible for the establishment of the business, and the way it operates, each instructor has input and works as part of the team. However, they are required to have their own insurance, maintain all their records such as member clearance forms, promotion of their classes and communication with members.

Instructor payment

Each fortnight, each instructor invoices the business for the classes taught. Payment is per-head. This means each instructor

is responsible for building the numbers in their classes. The decision about what they teach and when is entirely theirs. If only a few people attend, they only get paid for those people. If they want to do well and profit from their hard work, they need to promote and encourage people to attend.

Promotion

I set up social media pages for the business and created a new web site, which was much easier than I imagined it would be. I registered the business and purchased a domain.

Booking system

I established a booking system for classes. This helped us manage class limit requirements imposed by COVID regulations and created a sense of demand for the classes.

Cashless payments

I set up a Square account, which enables us to easily take credit card payments.

When classes resumed in May, we were ready. We re-opened with a new sense of confidence. Don't get me wrong, things are not always perfect. We have classes where only five people turn up and we barely cover our rent, and members complain about the facilities, or get confused about how bookings are made, but generally I feel we have now established a business which is here to stay. I'm still looking for our 'forever home', a place where we can really put down our roots, but we are secure where we are, and with low overheads we can really focus on building numbers.

Is going it alone for you?

Would starting your own group fitness business be a possibility for you? Ask yourself these questions:

- Do I have the skills to deliver classes that are not offered at other facilities in my area?
- Do I have a loyal following of participants that will attend my classes rather than go elsewhere?
- Do I have the skills to teach programs that don't require license fees?
- Are there venues locally that could accommodate the number of people I hope to have in each class?
- Do I have loyal and trustworthy peers who could join me?
- Do I have an overriding passion for fitness and do it for love, not just money?

If you answered yes to these questions, and

you are in the difficult position of being out of work or unhappy at your gym, then setting up your own group fitness business could be an option for you.

Hot tips for budding entrepreneurs

While it's still early days for my venture and I continue to learn every day, I do have a few big tips to give anybody looking to start their own business:

- Don't be greedy. People are more likely to put their trust in someone who is not overcharging or comes across as greedy.
- Keep your overheads low. Starting a business is risky. Lower the risk by keeping spending to a minimum.
- Be flexible. Give the people what they want, when they want it. This might mean making regular changes to accommodate the needs of the majority.
- Think and then think more. Make well considered decisions based on research, experience and input from your members.
- Get financial advice. Run your ideas past an accountant or financial advisor. Make sure you are above board with your tax, super and other legal requirements.
- Don't go it completely alone. You may be striking out on your own, but in terms of decision making, two or three heads are better than one. If possible, use the support, advice and skills of people you trust to help you along the way.

If you think this is an option for you, do it for the love. Have fun and be creative and you could reap the rewards of your hard work and passion. There's little more rewarding than experiencing the pride that comes with knowing you have used your skills and initiative to create something amazing on your own terms. **N**



Kirsty Nield

Starting her career as a fitness professional in 1999, Kirsty has established herself as one of Australia's leading group fitness instructors

and educators. Her passion for group fitness has driven her to start her own fitness studio, produce online courses, write journal articles and present at national and international fitness conventions. Kirsty's experience in group fitness management and instructor mentoring has allowed her to ensure instructors are continually up skilling, and the art of freestyle fitness stays on club timetables.



DO YOU NEED TO MAKE GROUP FITNESS THRIVE IN YOUR CLUB?

Introducing our new **Group Fitness Management course**, designed by Australian presenter and group fitness guru, Kirsty Nield.

This online course equips you with the tools to become a skilled manager of GFI's or PTs. If you've ever wanted to become a GFM, or you're currently in the group fitness space and want to learn how to create a reliable and skilled team, this course can help you do that.

LEARN:

- Innovative ways to lead your team
- Strategies to build class numbers
- How to make group fitness the heart of your club
- How to find and retain the best GFI's

\$109

for Network Members

3

CECS

ENROL HERE!



ABOUT THE COURSE CREATOR



KIRSTY NIELD

Over the past 20 years Kirsty has established herself as one of Australia's leading group fitness instructors and educators, creating and delivering challenging and dynamic group fitness classes. A GFM since 2009 and fitness presenter since 2012, she is passionate about mentoring and educating fellow fitness professionals.

MOVEMENT

FOR MENTAL HEALTH

A GUIDE TO TRAINING CLIENTS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

Learn how to coach clients that live with depression or anxiety and have been prescribed exercise by a mental health professional to help them on their journey to recovery.

This course has been designed to help fitness professionals confidently coach and guide clients to use exercise as a tool to reduce symptoms, reconnect to self, get to the heart of goal setting and move to feel better.

- Understand the signs, symptoms and different types of depression and anxiety
- Learn how to interpret referrals from, and create strong relationships with, mental health professionals
- Understand the benefits of exercise for clients living with depression and anxiety, to help them in their journey to recovery
- Learn how to identify risks, understand scope of practice and know when to refer a client
- Learn how to put together a creative program that empowers the client based on initial consultation

\$109

for Network Members

3

CECs/ CPDs

ENROL HERE!



ABOUT THE COURSE CREATOR



KYLIANNE TURTON

Kylianne is a counsellor, fitness industry educator and presenter, personal trainer, founder of The Movement Room and the Move for Mental Health Initiative. Her mission is to integrate different therapy strategies over movement and nature-based activities to overcome physical, emotional and mental challenges and boost mental wellbeing.



A PERSONAL SPONSOR COULD BE THE KEY TO YOUR CAREER GROWTH

An active supporter from within your business or industry – as opposed to a mentor – can greatly enhance your career prospects and success, writes business leader *Janine Garner*.

The uncertain future and ever changing work landscape that we are all now experiencing require us to step up and become the better someone that tomorrow needs. To meet this challenge we need to embrace curiosity, develop the skills to connect the dots between data, skills and people, be decisive despite not always having all the answers and, ultimately, inspire others to create a new future. Finding your own personal sponsor – the CEO of your own personal cheer squad and support crew – is critical to helping you navigate your success. This person will promote you whenever they can, sponsor your growth, create opportunities for you to shine and push you to do more because they believe in you. Sponsorship is key to your success in these constantly changing times.

The role of mentor

While mentors can counsel an individual, offering guidance and advice based on their own experience, it is more of a softly, softly approach; catching up for chats and being a willing sounding board for thoughts and ideas. Mentoring is more about giving advice and listening to concerns than saying 'yes, I will help you gain X'.

The role of sponsor

Active sponsorship, on the other hand, is far more targeted and powerful. A large obligation, it involves the intentional support of someone who takes action, collaborates

and shares what and who they know to proactively improve the way in which you operate. The results for those being sponsored are often far greater than for those who are mentored. The renowned economist and business consultant Sylvia Ann Hewlett summed this up perfectly when she said, 'Mentors advise, sponsors act'.

Usually sponsorship is from someone senior within the company that directs opportunities to a junior employee they believe shows strong potential. Sponsorship requires a significant commitment, as the sponsor essentially is willing to invest in your career growth by using their own social and political capital for your benefit.

In the 2018 TED Talk 'How to find the person who can help you get ahead at work', Carla Harris, vice chair and managing director at Morgan Stanley said, 'You are not going to ascend in any organisation without a sponsor.'

Sponsors:

- take action
- open doors
- make invaluable introductions
- give business/career leads
- are in it for the long haul
- help pave the path to success
- help others to achieve their visions, goals and personal and business success dreams
- build connections that influence activity and decision-making.

Think of a sponsor as your own personal champion. They are with you, by your side, through thick or thin, never giving up on you, always dreaming big with you. Sponsors

pull you towards your future dreams, make a noise about potential opportunities, spend time with you to explore how you're going to achieve your goals, and inspire you to become more.

But don't just take my word for it. According to research from the Centre for Talent Innovation (a Manhattan-based think tank), people with sponsors are 23% more likely to move up in their career than those without them. In addition, a 2011 study from the Centre for Work Life Policy published by the *Harvard Business Review* found that active promotion of others can result in a 30% increase in promotions, pay rises and projects for the person being sponsored.

Success is a complex process, but someone who has been there and done that can explain exactly how it is, what to do and how to navigate the journey – from their learned experience. A sponsor can become instrumental in helping build your confidence and supporting the pursuit of your passion. They will help catapult your career, unleash your brilliance so that you are able to surpass your dreams and become what you want to become. **N**



Janine Garner

Janine is a global thought leader on powerful networking, collaboration and transformational leadership.

A sought-after keynote speaker, educator and best-selling author, she works with high-profile global leaders, and helps many of Australia's top 50 ASX companies and multinationals. Janine's book Be Brilliant – how to lead a life of influence (Wiley) is available now.



ENHANCE YOUR PT CLIENTS' TRAINING WITH **PILATES TECHNIQUES**

NETWORK PILATES COURSE

Network's Fitness Australia-approved Pilates certification will provide you with the knowledge and skills to use Pilates principles in your personal training business. This functional Pilates course provides you with the knowledge to adapt Pilates-based movements to all ages and abilities.

Delivered 100% online, the Network Pilates Course has been created by international Pilates instructor trainer Stephanie Glickman, who has tailored the course content to the specific needs of personal trainers and group fitness instructors.

NETWORK PILATES



Course 1:
Fundamental Matwork Pilates



Course 2:
Intermediate Matwork Pilates

PLUS, fully updated Pilates specialisation courses now available!

[CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS AND TO GET STARTED](#)





PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR

BETTER VIRTUAL TRAINING

By adjusting how you communicate exercise prescription and correction, and implementing some practical guidelines, you can make virtual sessions as rewarding as your face-to-face ones writes PT and movement specialist *Guillaume Tual*.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the face of the fitness industry has changed significantly. Personal trainers and coaches have had to adapt in order to keep their businesses running. For many of us, the solution to the challenge posed by social isolation was to transition to delivering online sessions.

Although running one-on-one or group sessions online has helped – even saved – many businesses, we have seen the rise of new challenges, especially when it comes to cueing exercises and correcting technique.

What is missing with online training?

The most important and most obvious point is that regardless of how big a screen you are using, and how high the bandwidth and video resolution are, Zoom (or any other

video conferencing apps) cannot replace the cues humans use when they communicate.

At least half of the cues we use are non-verbal. As a personal trainer, think of how many times you demonstrate an exercise and correct your client through the use of touch. In the gym, when your clients watch you explain an exercise, they get information from your hand gestures, posture, tone of voice, facial expressions, body orientation and even the surrounding noises and light. We can also add the olfactory cues, primarily with pheromones (hormones secreted outside the body) that our subconscious brain registers to identify social organisation, danger or status.

That's a lot of extra information that gets lost with online training.

When training clients virtually, the usual 3-dimensional environment is now very much 2-D. This means that you're going to have to work extra hard to get your point across and deliver the best training

experience possible. If you have done some video sessions already, you have probably found that it is even more exhausting than 'real life' sessions. This is because of the extra cognitive processing (i.e. more thinking) necessary to fill all the missing cues of the usual face-to-face session.

From the client's point of view, the benefits of having someone physically nearby who motivates them, makes them feel safe, and encourages them with clapping and high-fives, disappear when they train with you via screen. Despite this, however, you still have the opportunity to create a safe, inclusive, fun and motivating environment for your clients.

Staying professional and effective

Although you don't have to head to your gym to run your online sessions, you still need to deliver a professional standard of training from home. To help do so, you should:

- Ensure you send the correct link in the



you and use their hands/fingers to feel the movement as it gives them good sensory feedback. Ask them to share what they feel and be present (i.e. don't just stare at the screen while they do their reps!). Depending on the type of exercises you are delivering, it may be useful to follow up by sending them a pre-recorded video of certain drills and a recap of the key points. You may already have these recorded, or you can send them links to relevant YouTube videos.

If you decide you need equipment that your clients don't have, try to be creative. Bottles, cushions, bags, sliding objects, brooms... the list is endless and improvising with these things can add some fun to the training. Your clients will appreciate that you are trying to go above and beyond to create an uplifting yet effective session.

Bring your A game to your plan B

There's no question that most fitness professionals are 'people people' who thrive on face-to-face interactions. While online may not be your preferred method of delivering training, the situation does present the opportunity to shake things up and show your versatility as a trainer.

This is a hard time for many of your clients, and you have a huge role to play in helping them stick to a healthy routine. You'll have to work harder to communicate your exercise prescription and technique correction, but with patience and enthusiasm you can make virtual sessions as rewarding as your face-to-face ones. **N**

Guillaume Tual
'Gee' is a Sydney-based movement and sport conditioning specialist with over a decade's industry experience. As a personal trainer and Animal Flow instructor, he is passionate about helping people improve their overall health and fitness through movement at his Sydney-based studio Peak Movement.



- client's session invite
 - Send a reminder to them the day before their session (routines have changed for everybody and it's all too easy to get days mixed up)
 - Check with your client that they will have enough space to move safely without risk of hitting furniture or walls
 - Check that they aren't likely to get overly distracted by running children or barking dogs while they train!
 - Request that your client position their camera/laptop at around waist height
 - Ask them to ensure they have sufficient light shining on them, but not from behind them (i.e. avoid having windows behind them) which can cause silhouetting
 - If running a multi-participant class or small group training session, ensure everyone's microphone is muted in order to avoid echoing
 - Ensure your own room is well lit (with light shining on you rather than from behind you)
 - Make sure your own environment is clean, tidy and quiet, and that you have everything you need to run the session – including your own water bottle!
- It is worth taking a couple of extra minutes to

do a quick trial to make sure all the settings work well enough for you to run a smooth session and that the environment is safe for your client.

Exercise prescription

When training via screen, you won't be able to fully replicate all of the exercises you have done with your clients at the gym, but you do have the opportunity to train them in new ways that use different tools and focus on bodyweight exercises.

Depending on the equipment available, you may be able to maintain some gym exercises, but remember that cueing will be much more difficult. For this reason, it's not the best time to experiment with complex new exercises, as technique and execution tips can easily get lost on the way. What may seem obvious to you, won't necessarily be for your clients, so be prepared to spend more time when adding a progression or showing a new drill.

When it comes to performing an exercise, you must ensure you use a clear vocabulary and demonstrate it from different angles. Don't hesitate to get your clients to mirror

It's not the best time to experiment with complex new exercises, as technique and execution tips can easily get lost on the way



A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO MASTERING THE HANDSTAND

Handstands are fast becoming one of the most popular bodyweight exercises around, so we've teamed up with gymnastics coach and FILEX presenter, Farkas Pungur, to create a Step-by-step Guide to Mastering the Handstand.

This course has been designed for fitness professionals who want to learn, design and include handstands in their client's training program (or just teach themselves!) The teaching steps will help you minimise the risk of injury and maximise the performance of your clients.

LEARN:

- Principles and biomechanics of the handstand
- The importance of core stability, and how structural muscles support each other
- Functional anatomy of the upper body
- Planning for personal training or small group training for handstands
- Postural assessments, screenings and exercises for stability, flexibility and strength
- Modifications, progressions and regressions.

\$109

for Network Members

3

CECS

ENROL HERE!



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
AUSTRALIA
Accredited Programs

FITREC



ABOUT THE COURSE CREATOR



Farkas Pungur

Farkas has been in gymnastics for over 40 years as a competitor, international performer and international level gymnastics coach. He has a Masters degree in Physical Education and a Bachelors in Gymnastics/ Sport Coaching, as well as a Diploma in Fitness. Currently working with Gymnastics QLD, you might also recognise Farkas as a competitor on Australian Ninja Warrior.

WANT MORE CLIENTS AND LESS PAPERWORK?

MAXIMISE YOUR MARKETING, MINIMISE YOUR ADMIN FOR PTS

\$89 for Network Members

3 CECs/CPDs

If you want to increase your client base and manage your business more effectively, this short online video course is packed with useful strategies to help you maximise your marketing and spend less time on energy-draining admin.

THIS COURSE EXPLORES:

- ▶ Target markets and marketing piece considerations
- ▶ Z-formation and other marketing equations that work
- ▶ Marketing to direct traffic to your website
- ▶ Social media and marketing campaigns
- ▶ Marketing to specific populations and demographics
- ▶ Dealing with phone enquiries
- ▶ Building rapport with potential new clients
- ▶ Setting up a sales and lead management system
- ▶ Dealing with prospective clients face-to-face
- ▶ Setting up a successful referral program.



[CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS AND TO GET STARTED](#)

INJURY & REHAB

WHEN LOWER BACK PAIN IS NOT A LOWER BACK PROBLEM

One of the key factors in helping clients overcome lower back pain is to implement corrective exercise programming that enhances movement and mobility in other areas of the body, writes corrective exercise specialist *Justin Price*.

At some point in their lives, 80% of people will experience lower back pain. In fact, back pain is the leading cause of disability in the world (Lees, 2014).

Individuals try all sorts of exercises to strengthen, stretch and release tension from their lower backs in an attempt to get rid of the pain. However, the majority of these techniques either do not work or only help for brief periods.

Why don't these exercises provide the expected relief, and what can you do as a fitness professional to help clients suffering from lower back pain?

Potential causes of lower back pain

Compared to other parts of the body, the spine is fairly inflexible. While it can move forward, backward, side to side and in rotation, there are other areas of the body such as the ankles, hips and shoulders that are designed to perform these types of movements more easily (McGill, 2002, Cook, 2010).

However, issues such as lifestyle and posture habits, injuries, surgeries,

musculoskeletal imbalances, stress and/or joint changes (e.g. arthritis) cause many people to have restrictions in these other areas of the body, and consequently, those parts do not work as they should.

Restrictions in the more mobile structures of the body typically result in the spine (especially the lower back) having to take up the slack for the lack of movement elsewhere. This can ultimately lead to overuse, pain and injury to the lower back (Price and Bratcher, 2019).

How can fitness professionals help?

One of the key factors in helping clients overcome lower back pain is to implement corrective exercise programming that facilitates movement and mobility in other areas of the body such as the feet, ankles, hips, thoracic spine and shoulder girdle.

If clients are able to move up and down, forward and backward, side to side and in rotation by using all of the parts of their body whose function it is to achieve these movements, stress will be dissipated throughout the entire kinetic chain, rather than simply settling in the lower back region.



THE QUICK READ

- Back pain is the leading cause of disability, with 80% of people experiencing lower back pain at some point in their lives
- Restrictions in the more mobile structures of the body typically result in the spine taking up the slack, resulting in overuse, pain and injury to the lower back
- PTs can help clients overcome lower back pain through corrective exercise programming that facilitates movement and mobility in the feet, ankles, hips, thoracic spine and shoulder girdle
- By appreciating how the entire body needs to work as an integrated system, trainers can design corrective exercises that reduce stress to the lower back, as well as risk of future injuries.

Corrective exercise strategies for lower back pain

Before attempting to gain mobility in the feet, ankles, hips, thoracic spine and shoulders with the following exercises, you should perform self-myofascial release techniques on the muscles that cross those joints (i.e., the calves, quadriceps, hamstrings, hip flexors, glutes, obliques, and shoulder musculature) (Rolf, 1989).

Once the tissues in these areas have been warmed up with SMR exercises, you can progress your client to the gentle stretching/mobilisation exercises outlined below (Price, 2018; Myers, 2001).

Corrective exercises for the feet and ankles

Calf stretch (with straight leg)

This stretch will help promote flexibility in the ankle when the knee is straight and the hip is extended, such as during walking. Flexibility in this area will ensure the leg can travel behind the hip correctly without the lower back having to overarch excessively to keep the torso upright.

Stand with one leg back and feet pointed straight ahead. Ensure that the back leg is straight and the heel remains in contact with the floor. Tuck the hips under until a stretch is felt in the calf of the straight leg. Perform for 20-30 seconds each side at least once a day.



Calf stretch (with straight leg)

Calf stretch (with bent leg)

This stretch will help promote flexibility in the ankle when the knee is bent, such as during squatting or bending down to pick something off the ground. This will ensure the ankles, knees, and hips can bend effectively so the lower back does not experience excessive stress when lowering the torso.

Stand in a split stance on a BOSU Balance Trainer with hands on a wall or desk to assist with balance. Push the heel of the back foot down and bend the knee of that leg to feel a stretch in calf muscles. Do not overpronate the foot as the knee bends. Perform on each leg for 20-30 seconds once a day.



Calf stretch (with bent leg)

Corrective exercises for the hips

Glute stretch

This stretch will help promote flexibility in the hip, so the leg can rotate effectively in the hip socket, such as during walking and running. This will help prevent excessive rotational stress to the lumbar spine.

Sit on the ground with the left leg straight and the right knee bent. Place the right foot on the outside side of the left leg while keeping the right knee bent and sit up tall. Hug the right knee toward the left shoulder to feel the stretch in the glutes. Perform for 20-30 seconds each side at least once a day.



Glute stretch

Hip and glute stretch

This stretch will help promote flexibility in the hips so the leg can rotate out, an action that occurs when changing directions in sports, getting out of the car, and during the backswing and follow through in sports that require the body to rotate.



Hip and glute stretch

Sit on the ground with both knees bent. Lift the right ankle and place it on your left knee. Sit upright and do not round your spine, to feel the stretch in the hip and glutes. Perform for 20-30 seconds each side at least once a day.

Hip flexor stretch

This stretch will help promote flexibility in the hips so that the leg can extend behind the body without overarching the lower back and placing excessive stress on this area.

Kneel on one knee with the other foot forward. Place a mat or towel under the knee for comfort. Tuck the hips under as you lift the torso upright to feel the stretch in the hip flexor. Perform for 20-30 seconds each side at least once a day.



Hip flexor stretch

Hamstring stretch

This stretch will help promote flexibility in the back of the leg so the torso can bend forward at the hips without placing excessive stress on the back.

Stand with the hips square and lift the right heel up onto a low chair or bench. Use a balance aid if necessary to help keep the spine straight and hips level. Gently pull the



Hamstring stretch

“ Restrictions in the more mobile structures of the body typically result in the lower back having to take up the slack for the lack of movement elsewhere ”

right hip back so that it comes back in line with the left hip to feel the stretch in the hamstring. Perform for 20-30 seconds each side at least once a day.

Corrective exercises for the upper back and shoulders

Doorframe stretch

This stretch promotes flexibility in the torso so the thoracic spine can extend and the shoulder can flex correctly, such as what should happen when walking and/or reaching over the head.

Stand in a doorway. Place the right arm on the doorframe at hip level, reach the left arm overhead and grab the doorframe. Place the left foot behind the right foot, tuck the pelvis under and gently lift the torso upright to feel the stretch along the side of the body. Switch sides and arms to perform this stretch on the other side and do it at least once a day for 20-30 seconds each side.



Doorframe stretch

Wall rotation stretch

This stretch helps the torso and hips to rotate more effectively, such as what should happen when walking or playing sports. This will ensure excessive rotational stress is not placed on the lower back.

Stand about 45cm away from a wall on your left-hand side. Place the left foot forward, ensure both feet are straight and rotate the torso toward the wall. Make sure the hips remain square and shoulders level. Switch sides and perform this stretch for 20-30 seconds on each side at least once a day.

Lower back pain can be debilitating, depressing and very uncomfortable. Use your knowledge of how the entire body needs to work as an integrated system to help you design corrective exercises that reduce both stress to the lower back, and the likelihood that this area of the body will get injured, or become problematic, in the future. **N**



Wall rotation stretch


REFERENCES

- Lees, K. 2014. *Low Back Pain Leading Cause of Disability Worldwide*. Science World Report.Com.
- Cook, G. 2010. *Movement*. Aptos, CA: On Target Publications.
- McGill, S. 2002. *Low Back Disorders: Evidence Based Prevention and Rehabilitation*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.
- Myers, T. 2001. *Anatomy Trains. Myofascial Meridians for Manual and Movement Therapists*. Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone.
- Price, J. and Bratcher, M. 2019. *The BioMechanics Method Corrective Exercise Specialist Education Program (2nd ed)*. San Diego, CA: The BioMechanics Press.
- Price, 2018. *The BioMechanics Method for Corrective Exercise*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics
- Rolf, I. P. 1989. *Rolfing: Reestablishing the Natural Alignment and Structural Integration of the Human Body for Vitality and Well-Being (revised edition)*. Rochester, VT: Healing Arts Press.



Justin Price

Justin is the creator of The BioMechanics Method Corrective Exercise Specialist Certification powered by Australian Fitness Network (Fitness Australia-approved). The BioMechanics Method is the fitness industry's highest rated specialty certification with trained specialists in over

70 countries. Click the link to find out more about how to become a corrective exercise specialist in The BioMechanics Method so you can help people alleviate their pain, move better and exercise without limitations. 



COACH CLIENTS TOWARDS POSITIVE DIETARY CHANGE



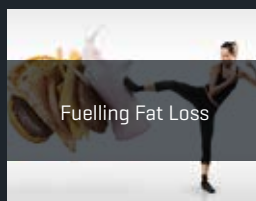
Gain the skills to provide your clients with nutritional support and coaching, by completing the Nutrition Intensive from Australian Fitness Network, the fitness industry's leading continuing education provider.

ABOUT THE COURSE

Comprising three comprehensive modules, the Nutrition Intensive equips fitness professionals with the skills to motivate clients to make positive dietary changes.



Nutrition Strategies for Strength and Size



Fuelling Fat Loss



Everyday Nutrition for Every Body



Effective Nutrition Coaching

Complete individual modules, or purchase all three CEC-approved modules and **receive the bonus 'Effective Nutrition Coaching' (valued at \$149) FREE.**

Network Members make HUGE savings on this – and all courses at fitnessnetwork.com.au.
If you aren't currently a member, join or renew now and start saving today!

[CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS AND TO GET STARTED](#)



NETWORK MEETS

SAM WOOD, PT & WOMEN'S HEALTH AMBASSADOR

Network caught up with PT and former Bachelor TV star *Sam Wood* to talk lockdown, changes in the industry and why women's health and fitness is so important to him.

Network: Hi Sam, firstly, thank you for taking a few minutes to shoot the breeze with Australian Fitness Network. You're based in Melbourne and are currently still in lockdown: how are you, and your PT studio and team, going during the pandemic?

Sam Wood: I'm not going to lie, it has been really tough. We're trying to be as proactive and positive as we can by doing renovations on the gym, offering virtual workouts and, of course, helping as many of our members as we can by providing free access to my online program '28 by Sam Wood'.

N: You became a personal trainer over 20 years ago after a last-minute switch from studying law. That's quite a U-turn! What made you decide to become a PT?

SW: Thank God I did. It was more a matter of

realising that being in an office wasn't for me and I needed to be out and about, interacting with people. My love for sport and fitness really made this feel like the right fit.

N: From your perspective, what have been the biggest changes in the health and fitness environment since you became a trainer in the late '90s?

SW: There have been plenty of changes. There's definitely been a shift from a training perspective, with the whole industry becoming more functional. There is so much more variety for people as the whole industry has grown. From weightlifting and aerobics through to functional training, boxing, circuits, CrossFit, Pilates and yoga... there are so many great options for people. The most obvious shift in more recent times has to be around community and technology. Tribe-based fitness communities, with so many people supporting each other and the continued rise and evolution in tech-based platforms, is seriously helping people get

active both at home and at the gym.

N: What made you so keen to sign up as an ambassador for Women's Health Week in 2020?

SW: To be honest, it was a really easy decision. I am such a proud husband and father, my girls are my world. I also have the privilege of working with thousands of women every single week on my '28' program. I hope that by being an ambassador I can not only inspire women to achieve their fitness goals and reap the health benefits, but encourage the men in women's lives to support them too.

N: What effect do you feel social media and social influencers have had on women's health and wellbeing, both physical and mental?

SW: I'm so glad you asked me this question as this is something I feel really strongly



about. I have a saying that is 'share, don't compare' and I feel like social media can be a great platform for inspiration and education. With so many influencers and so many different social media platforms, we need to be more discerning. There are too many people out there with no qualifications and, to be frank, no bloody idea. Too many of these people are giving unqualified advice and doing far more harm than good.

N: In your own Melbourne PT studio, The Woodshed, and in your online training, nutrition and mindset program '28 by Sam Wood' do you run female-specific programs or additional women's health workshops?

SW: Absolutely we do. At '28 by Sam Wood' we have a pregnancy and postnatal program and provide information and resources on hormonal health, menopause and the physiological differences that need to be considered when it comes to health and fitness.

N: Do you train female clients and members differently to how you train males?

SW: Not really. I try to treat everybody as an individual and try to understand their own unique situation from a goals perspective, their current level of physical fitness and any psychological and environmental considerations that need to be addressed to give that person the best chance of success. Whether they are male or female, this is always the case.

N: What is the most common barrier to exercise that you have encountered in new or prospective female clients and members – and how do you help them overcome it?

SW: I think there are a couple. Firstly, fear of failure; and secondly, lack of time. To help clients overcome the fear of failure, my motto is 'progress, not perfection'. It means taking mistakes in your stride, embracing your flaws, accepting that you are human and running your own race. Small changes lead to big results. With lack of time, you just have to find what works for you. The most important thing of all is consistency. This was actually a huge driving force behind '28 by Sam Wood'. I wanted to create something that was



convenient and easily accessible. Working out from home removes a lot of barriers that prevent people from exercising, especially for those that are time poor.

N: What does it mean to you to be able to promote better health to more mothers, grandmothers, daughters and sisters across Australia?

SW: This means everything. This is what I am all about. When you witness firsthand how much good physical and mental health benefits your wife and your kids and you hear thousands of success stories every single week, it's just the most beautiful reminder of why you do what you do and it just drives me to want to be able to help more people.

N: If you could give every woman in the country some key takeaways for improving their health this Women's Health Week, what would they be?

SW: I look at this question through two lenses.

The first, from an emotional and psychological perspective, and that is to love the body that you are in and direct your focus to how you feel and not how you look. On a more practical level, to make sure you eat real food and move your body in some way, every day. That includes resistance training. Do not be afraid of resistance training. It will help you get and stay strong and toned and is an integral part of a well-rounded program. **N**



Sam Wood

Sam has over 20 years' experience as a personal trainer and is recognised as one of Australia's leading experts and media commentators in the

health and fitness industry. A father and husband, he is on a mission to help people move more, eat better and make a positive change to their lives. Sam is the founder and personal trainer of '28' home fitness and nutrition program, and the owner of Australia's largest personal training studio, The Woodshed, based in Brighton, Melbourne.

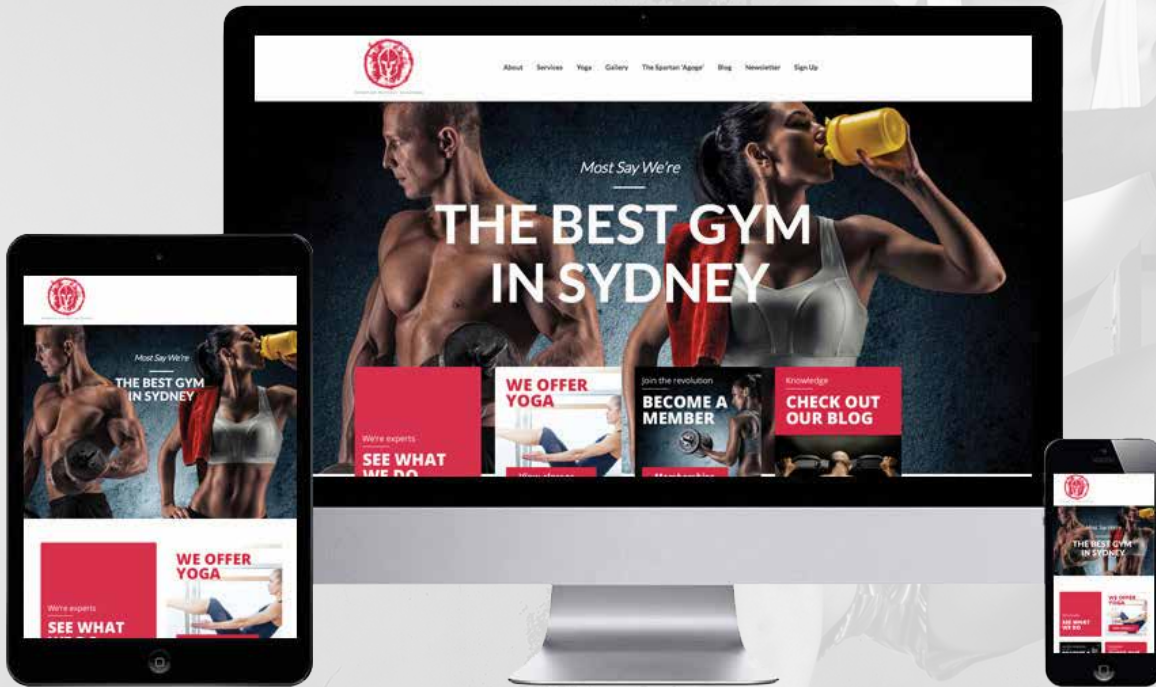


I hope that by being an ambassador I can not only inspire women to achieve their fitness goals and reap the health benefits, but encourage the men in women's lives to support them too



THE ONLY WEBSITE YOU'LL EVER NEED

All inclusive website design packages *from \$59 per month.*



Don't chance your **online presence** or reputation to your family members, colleagues or even gym member friends – it's just not worth it. GYMLINKsites make the process of designing, developing and supporting your website **hassle free**, so you can concentrate on what you do best – **running your business.**

Your new site up and running in 30 days!



Security & Performance

We constantly monitor your hosting environment, install all updates and complete regular backups.



Ongoing Content

Short on time? We will add your website content to constantly keep your site up to date.



Complete Hosting

Your domain name, emails and website are all managed together in our customised hosting environment.



Full Technical Support

Videos, tutorials, FAQ's, knowledge base, dedicated, friendly Australian support team.

RESEARCH REVIEW

THE EARTH IS NOT FLAT! (AND YOUR TREADMILL NEEDN'T BE EITHER)

Does running on a curved, non-motorised treadmill require more effort and musculature involvement than a traditional, motorised one?

Review by Dr Mike Climstein PhD & Dr Joe Walsh PhD



This type of treadmill is proposed to facilitate a more natural running style in which the user is required to run on the balls of the feet



Title: Physiological and Perceptual demands of Running on a Curved nonmotorized treadmill at different grades

Authors: Dr's Schoenmakers and colleagues, School of Sport, Rehabilitation and Exercise, University of Essex, United Kingdom

Source: Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research (2020). 34 (5): 1197-1200

Introduction: Do I consider myself athletic (despite my advanced age)? Absolutely. I can still surf, skateboard, rollerblade, cycle (without training wheels), study and teach karate. I do balance board training, have a good jump rope regime and turn the stairs into a workout by running up them (and walking down), hopping up every third step with both legs, or hopping up every second step, alternating legs – all of which is good plyometric training for increasing kicking power. I believe that most athletic-type movements are easy for me to adapt to. Or so I thought.

I have my normal gym training regime (i.e. order of exercises) that I have followed for decades. Although I loathe aerobic exercises like treadmill running, I appreciate the benefits obtained from high intensity interval training, so it's first on the to-do list at the gym every session. And being the 'I fear change' person that I am, I have a favourite treadmill that I run on. It's adjacent to the wall so I don't have someone on each side of me while I am training (which is becoming the new normal anyway due to COVID-19 regulations), it is out of direct sunlight so doesn't heat up mid-day, and is covered by two industrial strength fans that provide perfect cooling without blowing the air directly on me. Yes, I am high maintenance.

Just recently, after a morning teaching at university (metabolic



this newfangled motor-less intruder into my comfortable domain. This leads us to the subject of this Research Review, the study by Dr Schoenmakers and his colleagues.

The curved, non-motorised treadmill has actually been around for quite some time, with its development originating in mid-1970s Germany. The premise of this type of treadmill is that it is proposed to facilitate a more natural running style in which the user is required to run on the balls of the feet. The movement involves a mix of gravity and friction and, since the foot strike is not perpendicular to the belt, it forces the belt to move due to the curved shape of the treadmill. It supposedly requires more work (i.e. musculature involvement/effort) to move the treadmill belt, compared to running at the same speed on a traditional, motorised treadmill. This type of treadmill is also challenging in that it allows the user to subconsciously change their pace with every step they take, whereas with traditional motorised treadmills the speed is constant. This claim of 'more work' is what Dr Schoenmakers and his colleagues investigated.

Method: In this study, 10 physically active and fit males volunteered to run for six minutes on both a motorised treadmill and a non-motorised curved treadmill. Participants ran at 10.0 km/h on the non-motorised curved treadmill and also at 10.0 km/h at 1%, 4%, 6% and 8% grade on a motorised treadmill. All testing took place over five sessions. During each session, heart rate, Borg's rating of perceived exertion (RPE, rated 6 to 20) and oxygen consumption (VO₂ ml/kg/min) were measured.

Results: Unlike me, all participants had no difficulty running on both the motorised and non-motorised curved treadmill. As predicted, the heart rate, RPE and oxygen consumption were significantly higher on the non-motorised curved treadmill than on the traditional treadmill, with the following results recorded:

health this semester) I turn up to the gym and someone is on my treadmill! OK, I have to get through this workout as I have research to get on with and no time to muck around, I will do abs, core and stretch first. Twenty minutes or so later and I want to get onto my treadmill, and someone is still on it. But I've noticed a new treadmill, very different from all of the others as it's not flat, is obviously curved and has no power on button. How can this be? No matter, I am a coordinated, can-do anything athletic beast... aren't I?

Apparently not. I found the curved, non-motorised treadmill to be much harder than a conventional motorised one (at the same running speed), however the real wakeup was when my usual treadmill became available and I quickly stopped using the non-motorised curved one and jumped onto my trusty old friend. OMG, what was wrong with me? I found myself unable to function on the motorised treadmill. Time to hit the weights, get home and read up on



THE QUICK READ

- The non-motorised curved treadmill originated in Germany in the mid-1970s
- This type of treadmill is proposed to facilitate a more natural running style
- Researchers investigated whether running on a non-motorised, curved treadmill required greater energy expenditure than running on a traditional motorised treadmill
- Heart rate, RPE and oxygen consumption were significantly higher on the non-motorised curved treadmill than on the traditional treadmill
- The study lends support to including non-motorised curved treadmills in running regimes for the purpose of variability
- Previous studies have found validity in the use of the non-motorised curved treadmill, but have urged caution on the part of competitive runners for whom the apparatus may impact running gait.

TABLE: Increases in 'work' on curved non-motorised treadmill compared to different grades on traditional treadmill

Grade on traditional motorised treadmill	Increase in oxygen consumption on curved treadmill	Increase in heart rate on curved treadmill	Increase in RPE on curved treadmill
1%	+28%	+33%	+55%
4%	+12%	+11%	+16%
6%	+5%	+5%	+1%



When the runners were at 10.0 km/h and 8% grade on the motorised treadmill, the values for oxygen consumption, heart rate and RPE were near identical to running at 10.0 km/h on the non-motorised curved treadmill. In short, the greater the incline on the traditional motorised treadmill, the closer the energy expenditure got to that of the curved non-motorised version.

The authors concluded that the non-motorised curved treadmill elicited higher oxygen consumption, heart rate and RPE at all of the inclines except for 8% which elicited a similar result to running level at the same speed (10.0 km/h) on the curved non-motorised treadmill. The authors attributed the higher values recorded on the non-motorised curved treadmill to its unsteadiness. The authors recommended the use of the non-motorised curved treadmill to complete alternative running training sessions and to emulate uphill training sessions.

Pros: This is a good, practical study which lends support to including non-motorised curved treadmills in your running regimes for the purpose of variability. Previous research by Edwards and colleagues (2017) support the findings of higher cardiorespiratory costs using a non-motorised curved treadmill. They found that when running for six minutes (females 9 to 15 km/h; males 10.5 to 16.5 km/h), heart rate, RPE and oxygen consumption were higher on the non-motorised curved treadmill as compared to a motorised treadmill. Interestingly, the researchers also found that lighter runners were required to work at a higher relative intensity due to having to overcome the treadmill belt resistance on the non-motorised curved apparatus.

However, for competitive runners, caution should be exercised. A study by Hatchett and colleagues (2018) investigated the effects on running on a curved treadmill with regard to running gait. These researchers found significant changes in running stride length, step length, increased stride angle and an increased imbalance score.

I found the curved treadmill output screen to be very good, in that it provided me with speed (km/h), watts, time and distance. Although my initial encounter with it shook me out of my comfort zone, I'm determined to give the curved treadmill another shot and plan to incorporate a couple of weeks of high intensity interval training on it into my regime. Let's see if my fitness improves.

Cons: It would have been beneficial for the researchers to also have investigated the direct comparison at lower intensities, such as walking and power walking between a traditional motorised treadmill and the curved, non-motorised treadmill. It appears that, based on this study, a curved treadmill is similar in energy expenditure to



Heart rate, RPE and oxygen consumption were significantly higher on the non-motorised curved treadmill than on the traditional treadmill



running on a normal treadmill with an incline. It may be that the higher energy expenditure is also influenced by running on an unfamiliar surface and goes down slightly as the runner adapts to it. The biomechanics of running on a regular treadmill is different to those of running on normal ground or a running track. It should be remembered that curved, non-motorised treadmill running also has different biomechanical requirements (Hatchett et al., 2018) than normal running. Therefore, caution should be used in extensively using a curved or non-curved mechanised treadmill to train for sports performance, especially running performance. **N**

REFERENCES

Hatchett, A., Armstrong, K., Parr, B., Crews, M., & Tant, C. (2018). The Effect of a Curved Non-Motorized Treadmill on Running Gait Length, Imbalance and Stride Angle. *MDPI Sports*. 6(3):58-67.

Edwards, R., Tofari, P., Cormack, S., & Whyte, D. (2017). Non-motorized Treadmill Running is Associated with Higher Cardiometaabolic Demands Compared with Overground and Motorized Treadmill Running. *Frontiers in Physiology*. 8(914):1-11.




**Dr Mike Climstein, PhD FASMF
FACSM FAAESS AEP**

Dr Climstein is one of Australia's leading Accredited Exercise Physiologists. He is a faculty member in Clinical Exercise Physiology, Sport & Exercise Science at Southern Cross University (Gold Coast).



Dr Joe Walsh, PhD

Joe is an exercise science researcher. He has worked in a number of large international research teams with study findings presented around the world. In addition to working in the university sector, he is a director of Fitness Clinic Five Dock and Sport Science Institute. 

EARN YOUR **FREE** CEC OR CPD!

Every issue of *Network* magazine includes articles linked to a 1-CEC or CPD [NZ] course that is FREE to Network Members.

This quarter, the course is based on the following features:

- ▶ When lower back pain is not a lower back problem [21]
- ▶ The Earth is not flat! [and your treadmill needn't be either] [29]
- ▶ Is your pregnant client holding her breath? [36]
- ▶ Stay in your lane! Physical distancing in the pool [41]
- ▶ Walk together – nurturing collaborative relationships with clients [51]

To earn yourself 1 CEC or CPD, simply **click here** to find the **'Network Spring 2020'** in your Member Portal.

Read the articles, successfully answer the multiple-choice questions, and you're done!

For help logging in to your Member Portal, call our friendly team on 1300 493 832, or email info@fitnessnetwork.com.au.

ACCESS YOUR NEW COURSE HERE



INFORMATION HANDOUT

THE TRAINING BENEFITS OF CUTTING BACK THE BOOZE

Drinking large quantities of alcohol negatively impacts fitness in more ways than simply adding 'empty calories'. *Laura Bajurny* looks at how alcohol could be counteracting your hard work at the gym.

As we emerge from lockdown and try to get back on track with our fitness goals, there's one behaviour change that could positively impact our results straightaway – drinking less.

There are many benefits associated with reduced alcohol intake, including getting a better night's sleep, saving money and reducing feelings of stress and anxiety. Perhaps a lesser-recognised benefit, though, is how drinking less can mean better results in the gym.

Despite implementing a dedicated exercise routine and healthy eating plan, many would agree we don't always see our efforts rewarded as fast as we'd like. For those that drink alcohol, those Friday night beers or weekend wines could be part of the reason.

While the effects of alcohol on weight varies significantly between individuals, the Better Health Channel suggests alcohol can affect weight gain because kilojoules from alcohol are actually burnt first, which may result in kilojoules from food being stored as fat if a person has exceeded their recommended daily intake.

Alcoholic drinks can also be high in kilojoules and might lead you to inadvertently exceed your recommended daily intake despite proactively 'eating better' at mealtimes and snacking more

healthily. Some people also find themselves hungrier when drinking alcohol, or making poorer food choices after drinking (stone cold sober people are less likely to go on 2am kebab runs!)

What's more, the effects of alcohol consumption on an individual's body can often last until the next day, impacting that next gym session. Research from the National Strength and Conditioning Association found hangover symptoms produced by alcohol include electrolyte imbalance, hypoglycemia, gastric irritation, vasodilation and sleep disturbances, which can make gym sessions feel a lot harder – or be the reason you send that last-minute cancellation text to your trainer or gym buddy.

With the Australian National University recently finding that 20% of those surveyed had upped their alcohol consumption during the pandemic, some of us may have noticed the arrival of an extra 'COVID kilo' or two.

The Australian Millennial Report also discovered weight loss and fitness is one of the main health goals for around half of young people aged 25-35 years old, yet only 10% said they wanted to reduce or stop their alcohol intake.

With all of this in mind, it's fair to suggest that increased alcohol consumption could be hindering your attempts to reach your health and fitness goals. While you don't

want to be told how to live your life or that you need to abstain from drinking alcohol altogether, if your current drinking habits might struggle to be classified as 'moderate', you could enhance your training outcomes, and enjoy a number of other side effects (hello more disposable income) by reducing your alcohol intake.

In a bid to support people in achieving their health goals, including better results in the gym, the Alcohol and Drug Foundation has some interesting information on the many benefits that can come from reducing alcohol intake. It's #CelebrateYOU campaign focuses on encouraging young adults, particularly those that may have increased their drinking during lockdown, to celebrate the benefits of drinking less.

For more information, visit adf.org.au/celebrateyou/ **N**



Laura Bajurny

An Information Officer at the Alcohol and Drug Foundation, Laura is keen for fellow millennial women to recognise and celebrate the health and wellbeing benefits of drinking less alcohol.





EMBRACING THE OPPORTUNITY FOR MORE ONLINE LEARNING

In June we offered all Network Members access to a number of free online courses at a time when many of us were unable to work in our PT and group fitness instructor businesses as much as we would like – or need. It was fantastic to see a great many of you taking us up on this offer, and we received some lovely messages of thanks in return. Network Member Brooke summed it up when she wrote “Thank you so much, that’s honestly so much help at this time!”

On the topic of courses, we are pleased to be adding two new ones to Network’s extensive online education library this month. The first, ‘Pilates for Strength’ written by instructor and educator Stephanie Glickman, looks at how to supplement PT sessions with Pilates-based strength exercises. This new course completes Stephanie’s series of Pilates courses created specifically for fitness professionals.

The second, ‘Negotiate: Communication and Conflict Resolution’, written by fitness businesswoman and workplace mediator Edwina

Griffin, takes a deep dive into the practicalities and nuances involved in successfully negotiating the best outcomes for yourself in any professional situation.

Check out both new courses – along with dozens of others – at fitnessnetwork.com.au



THE SOCIAL NETWORK

Click to check out these recent posts from Network’s socials.

I tried a different retro workout every day for a week and... oh, boy!



ClassPass is fast-tracking plans to add PT sessions to its platform



A survey and data analysis showed that 62% of adults thought that being active is more important now than pre-COVID-19



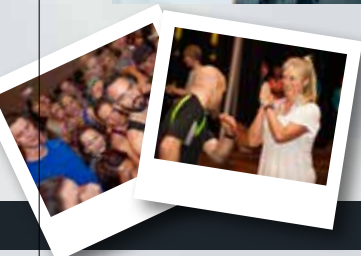
It may be possible to predict who would benefit from behavioural therapy and exercise



A little-known condition can affect fertility in women who exercise too hard



Is Apple about to take a bigger bite into the home fitness market with a Peloton-style fitness subscription?





YOUR CHANCE TO WIN!

A watch with the smarts to keep up with your active lifestyle

It's an ongoing challenge this year to keep clients focused on their fitness and mental wellbeing. The Suunto 7 delivers the best in both smarts and sports for active Australians, providing access to 70+ sports modes for when you want to work out and Google OS Wear software for all your everyday smart feature needs, including Google Assistant, Google Pay, music and more.

Designed and tested in Finland, the Suunto 7 is shock, water and dirtproof with

an impressive battery life of 48 hours on smartwatch use or up to 12 hours in GPS tracking mode.

The perfect smartwatch for people with an active lifestyle, the Suunto 7 offers easy access to steps and calories, the ability to customise your own sport modes, along with heatmaps to show where hotspots are for running, cycling, swimming or hiking.

For your chance to win a Suunto 7 (RRP \$799), email editor@fitnessnetwork.com.au and tell us in 50 words or less your biggest success story with a client in 2020.

suunto.com



Be boss of your food prep with a multi-functional kitchen buddy!

The PREPSTAR Compact Food Processor from Morphy Richards is your key to compact, multi-functional and innovative cooking and food prep.

With a grating/slicing disk, beater, emulsifier and blade, you can make everything from slaws and zoodles, to delicious, healthy pancakes.

Designed to be compact and practical, all the accessories fit inside the PREPSTAR neatly and easily, so you can create food magic and whisk it away all in an instant.

Perfect for those with small kitchens and time-poor individuals who aren't willing to forego healthy eating when the clock is against them, the PREPSTAR Compact Food Processor could be the new star of your kitchen.

For your chance to win a PREPSTAR, email editor@fitnessnetwork.com.au and tell us in 50 words or less why you're ready to make best friends with this handy piece of kitchen kit.

morphyrichards.com.au/product/prepstar-compact-food-processor



Daily shotz of gut health on the go!

BellyUp Shotz are a convenient, on-the-go daily dose of gut health and immune support, launched recently as an extension to the BellyUp effervescent probiotic drinks. Available in Organic Ginger and Lychee Green Tea flavour, the shotz are 100% vegan, 99.5% sugar, gluten and dairy free and made in Australia.

The shotz have a triple-action approach to aid digestion, formulated as they are with six strains of raw probiotics via a unique five-stage fermentation process. This results in a bio-available base for greater absorption of beneficial bacteria and essential nutrients that support healthy microflora and vibrant health and wellbeing.

For your chance to win 1 of 3 BellyUp Shotz prize packs, email editor@fitnessnetwork.com.au and tell us in 50 words or less why you need to love ya guts a little more this spring.

bellyup.com.au/shotz

Thinking of bidding goodbye to the booze?

Darren Taylor's book *Finding Your Sober Bubble* has been written as a resource not only for those dependent on alcohol, but for anyone who feels they may drink too much, or binge on the booze for the wrong reasons.

Inspired by the author's own struggles to fill life's 'void' with drink, the book contains a wealth of tips and empowering passages that not only serve as a guide toward sobriety, but educate readers on the raw, real-world effects of alcohol overconsumption.

Written in a fun and easy-to-read style, Taylor welcomes us to the world of sober living. In his words 'Through determination, self-belief and frozen fruit and tonic, you too can thrive in sobriety by creating your very own sober bubble.'

For your chance to win 1 of 3 copies of *Finding Your Sober Bubble*, email editor@fitnessnetwork.com.au and tell us in 50 words or less why you're ready to take a break from the bottle.

theuniofife.com/book-release-finding-your-sober-bubble





IS YOUR PREGNANT CLIENT HOLDING HER BREATH?

By teaching your pregnant client how to use her breath effectively during training, and simulating some physiological challenges of labour, you can help her prepare for childbirth, writes women's health expert *Dianne Edmonds*.

“

Improved muscle tone, strength and endurance can help women to have more energy for labour

”

For over 25 years I have been teaching pregnant women to focus on their breath out as a strategy for relieving tension and coping with contractions during the first stage of labour. During the global pandemic, however, I have noticed myself holding my breath on a number of occasions. As the impact of COVID-19 and restrictions continues, it affects a pregnant woman's support networks, particularly those with family and friends living interstate or internationally. For many, their stress response is heightened, even before they go into labour. This may reduce their stress resilience and their ability to cope with the challenges of labour and birth, as well as alter their reserves postnatally for meeting the demands of a new baby.

Kylianne Farrell, founder of Move for Mental Health and a Gidget Foundation Ambassador, reported recently that there has been a 50% increase in requests for help from pregnant and postnatal women

since the pandemic, highlighting the need for building the strength of support systems for women.

The role of the fitness professional

The benefits of regular exercise during pregnancy are known to increase energy and enhance mood and sleep. Improved muscle tone, strength and endurance can help women have more energy for labour. This, in turn, may help reduce the effects of fatigue during labour, the duration of which varies considerably between women.

In addition, specific mental training and preparation may help women to better cope with labour, using recognised tools in antenatal preparation for birth programs, including relaxation and breathing awareness.

Fitness professionals are well positioned to teach and coach pregnant clients how to use the breath effectively during training, whether their sessions are face to face

or online. Breathing out is a focus during strength and resistance training, and during stretch and relaxation exercises. By teaching a woman to shift her focus during training to the breath (or breath control), she can learn to use this as a tool in the later stages of pregnancy and labour.

Breathing training for the first stage of labour

As women transition into the later stages of their pregnancy, their focus often shifts to the safe delivery of their baby. This includes starting to prepare for labour and birth.

In first stage, the uterus contracts to open and dilate the cervix (the opening of the uterus), in preparation for second stage where the baby moves down the birth canal.

Contractions of the uterus are felt by the pregnant woman and vary from between 30–45 seconds in early labour, to 60–90 seconds as labour progresses. Contractions become stronger as labour advances, and the intervals between them reduce in duration.

Clients are used to being cued to work with their breath when training, stretching, undertaking weights and resistance work, and doing relaxation or releasing work. With pregnant clients, consider using training times in 30–90 second intervals when designing programs, in order to mimic the durations of ‘work’ (contractions) and intervals during labour.

Squat training

During squatting (photo 1), bring your clients awareness to tension that they may be holding in their shoulders or jaw. Point out tension signs, and highlight that she can drop her shoulders down or unclench her teeth.

During a squat, the focus on the breath out is normally performed during the press up or down. Around the 8th to 12th rep, reinforce the client’s focus on the deliberate breath out, as the effort increases, and relate this to training for labour.

A squat hold for 30–60 seconds is another opportunity to train mentally for the birth, by getting the client to focus on how to use breathing out as a tool for dealing with contractions. A sustained squat simulates the length of time of a contraction. Repetitions can be added for trained clients, providing they feel no pelvic floor



By simulating the length of time of a contraction, a sustained squat hold is an opportunity to train for labour



THE QUICK READ

- Training your clients to use breathing and stretching sequences helps give them the opportunity for physical and mental preparation for labour and birth
- Ways to train include using breathing through the holding of a deeper squat, through counting of repetitions in strength and resistance training, and during stretches
- Pointing out to clients any patterns of tension observed in their shoulders, neck or jaw and giving the instructions to move these areas can help them become aware of the effects of stress and tension held in the body
- Breathing out during labour gives women something to focus on, and reduces the build-up of muscle tension (tension can’t build up as much when breathing out)
- Remind clients to use and enhance the skills that they have developed during training sessions.

pressure. Check there is no discomfort in their back, pelvis or lower abdominal area or their knees.

This training can also enhance her ability to assume upright birthing positions that will enable her to benefit from the effect of gravity during labour, if she chooses.

Relaxation training

Relaxation training using the law of reciprocal inhibition is one method that can be used in active positions with your clients, such as in the case of squat training, focusing on pulling the shoulders down and relaxing the jaw if tension is noted in response to a stressor.

Body tension is a typical response to stressors. If the body is holding excessive muscle tension when labour is initiated, it can be more tiring and can result in the release of more adrenaline and cortisol. This may inhibit the progression of labour and extend the birth process.

Reciprocal inhibition is described as the spinal process of inhibition of a motor neuron pool when the antagonistic motor neuron pool is activated. This principle is used in the Mitchell Method of physiological relaxation

sequence, whereby women are advised to move key points in their body away from the position of tension.

A simple explanation for clients is: there is automatic relaxation of the opposite muscle to the one being used. For example, when a ball is kicked or the leg extended, the hamstrings need to automatically relax, otherwise it would tear. We can use this 'law' in the body to enhance physiological relaxation in times of stress.

For use during labour, the body can be moved quickly into what is called 'a position of ease' such as 4-point kneeling leaning over a Swiss ball, and deliberately releasing muscle tension by lowering the shoulders, loosening and stretching out the fingers and relaxing the legs into a comfortable position. Use three key phrases of 'low shoulders', 'fingers long and soft', and 'feet resting' while getting into a position quickly, and then cue the focus on breathing out during a contraction in the first stage of labour.

This technique can also be used for postnatal mums during breastfeeding, as excess tension may interfere with the let-down of breast milk. A mum holding a baby and feeling tension through her shoulders can lower them down, and then deliberately focus on breathing tension out of her body. If she has been rushing, or her mind is distracted, breathing out is a strategy that allows the mind to focus and calms the nervous system. This may assist with relaxation prior to feeding the baby.

Stretching to train breathing awareness

In preparing for labour, stretching can be used to release stress and tension and is especially effective when combined with a skillfully focused breath out.

Stretches can also enable a client to mentally attend to instructions when practicing a labour breathing sequence, and help them to feel what it is like to get into that zone of focus for the length of a contraction. Regular stretching also helps women to release the tension associated with daily stressors.



Combined with a skillfully focused breath out, stretching, such as a side flexion stretch, can release stress and tension

During a sustained stretch, both awareness of tension holding patterns and focusing on a releasing breath out can be highlighted to clients.

During a side flexion stretch (photo 2), question what area in the body is affected with the breath out. Is it the rib area, through the lats, or the obliques? Are shoulders elevated –and cuing therefore needed to deliberately lower them before or during a stretch? Do they feel more release as they focus on 3–5 elongated breaths out?



Rotation stretches may bring tension-induced upper chest breathing pattern restrictions to the client's awareness

During a rotation stretch, where is the stretch felt? Tension held in the body over a period of time can cause an upper chest breathing pattern with increased use of accessory muscles in the front of the neck. An opening up rotation stretch, such as in photo 3, may bring the restriction to the client's awareness and should be encouraged to be performed daily to manage the buildup of tension.

Rotation in sidelying is another option. Breathing out with each rotation for 8–10 repetitions with each set lasting 30–45 seconds can serve as an opportunity to practice breathing awareness for the same length of time as an early contraction.

Hamstring stretches

A focused breath out during a hamstring stretch seated on a ball (photo 4), or seated on the floor and leaning forward (photo 5), is another opportunity to train breathing awareness as a tool that can be used during labour. Holding a stretch longer allows the client to feel and focus the intention to release muscle tension while consciously breathing out.

Hamstring, adductor and calf stretches improve flexibility, which will increase the ease for the client to transition into various positions for the second stage of labour. Upright positions, such as supported squatting, sitting or on all fours, expand the dimensions of the bony pelvis, which is suggested to facilitate the birthing process.



A focused breath out during a hamstring stretch can train breathing awareness

Childs pose sequence

A good sequence for combining stretching and focused breathing is the yoga asana 'balasana' or child's pose (photo 6).



Balasana' or 'child's pose' combines gentle stretching with focused breathing



Reinforce the client's focus on the deliberate breath out, as the effort increases, and relate this to training for labour.



Instruct the client to:

- from a seated or kneeling position on the floor, gently move into child's pose
- hold the position and focus on the breath out let the breath in come naturally
- deliberately breathe out tension from the body
- become aware of any jaw clenching and, if tension is being held, unclench their teeth and lower their jaw and refocus on the breath out
- take 5 more breaths out, unless they need to move out of the pose for reasons of comfort (precaution: there should be no pain or discomfort in the hips, back or pelvic joints or in the lower abdominal wall or pelvic floor area)
- move into 4-point position, stretch one calf muscle and focus on a long-extended breath out
- repeat for the other side.

Labour is a uniquely demanding experience for women, both physically and mentally. By helping your pregnant client harness the power of focused breathing, you can help her face it with increased confidence and a greater sense of control. **N**

FOR REFERENCES & FURTHER READING CLICK HERE



Dianne Edmonds

A physiotherapist based in an obstetric GP clinic, Dianne is a course creator, Women's Health Ambassador for Australian Fitness Network and the Director of The Pregnancy Centre. She has worked in women's health and fitness for 25 years and was integral in the development of the Pelvic Floor First resources.

MORE

Dianne has created six pregnancy-related CEC courses available exclusively in Australia through Australian Fitness Network. Ranging from Antenatal Core Training, to Advanced Postnatal Core Programming, all courses are accredited for CECs and other professional development credits, and Network Members, as always, receive special rates. Click here to view Network's complete range of female-focused fitness courses.



ONLINE COURSE

100 STEPS TO PLANK: BUILDING ABDOMINAL STRENGTH

Build your clients core fitness levels systematically, particularly when working with women who have experienced abdominal muscle wall changes following pregnancy and childbirth – all while protecting the pelvic floor, spine and pelvis.



About course creator, Dianne Edmonds

Dianne is a physiotherapist with over 20 years of experience with pregnancy, postnatal and pelvic floor education, treatment and fitness programs. She was the lead physiotherapist and project officer for the Pelvic Floor First project, run by the Continence Foundation of Australia and is a Pelvic Floor First Ambassador.

\$129 (NETWORK MEMBERS)
5 CECS/CPDS



MORE INFO
CLICK HERE

WATER FITNESS

STAY IN YOUR LANE!

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

IN THE POOL

When it comes to social distancing in group exercise, the water presents a different proposition to land-based classes. Aqua fitness specialist *Claire Barker-Hemings* looks at some techniques to keep classes fun and effective, as well as safe.

“

We need to be aware of how our members feel, especially given the older demographic of many aqua groups

”

Like so many industries, the fitness world has been turned upside down by COVID-19. The entire industry shut down overnight.

Most of us knew it was coming, as operating was becoming more challenging due to restrictions and rules being rolled out by centres, following guidelines from state and territory governments. In Melbourne, after the initial shutdown, we had a glimmer of hope with a brief re-opening, but then, just over two weeks later, we were closed again. In the meantime, other parts of Australia have been able to open and operate under strict guidelines.

Social distancing seems to be here to stay, for the foreseeable future at least. As part of the overall strategy to slow the spread of the virus, numbers at facilities have been limited by regulations laid down by the appropriate authorities. In land-based group fitness and gym settings, social distancing has been achieved by marking spots on the floor to indicate the areas within which participants must stay. In the pool, however, it is a little more challenging, since it would be difficult to place markers on the pool floor and it is not unusual for a person to ‘drift’ from the place they started due to turbulence created during the workout. Staying on one spot in the water is quite a challenge!

As group fitness leaders, we need to instil confidence by adhering to the rules outlined by the club or centre’s management. Our classes can still be effective, engaging and fun, but it is necessary for everyone on the

team to follow a consistent approach in order to set a good example and ensure that participants also understand what is required of them.

Managing the logistics

I have spoken to a few of my aqua instructor friends in Australia and the US to see how they are managing social distancing during their sessions. Here are a few of the points that have been raised:

COVID-19 plan

If you work for a facility you will almost certainly find that a plan has already been created and that you have a responsibility to familiarise yourself with it. If you run private classes, it is recommended that you create your own plan to ensure that you are implementing the guidelines set out by the regulating authority.

Equipment

I have found the policy on equipment to differ centre to centre, with some clubs using equipment and others opting to use none. There is no sharing of equipment during the class and it is cleaned afterwards. Others are not permitting use of the facility’s equipment or encouraging clients to bring their own. In addition to any existing guidelines, we need to be aware of how our members feel, especially given the older demographic of many aqua groups. Some will be happy to use equipment, whereas others will not. As professionals, we need to put our own



Different coloured cones or other items can be used as markers to help participants stay in their lines

feelings on the matter aside and be respectful of the fact that some people are feeling vulnerable and worry about using equipment that other people may have used.

Class numbers

As mentioned, the appropriate authorities are stipulating the number of people who can be in a facility at any given time and demanding that the members be appropriately socially distanced. In most cases this has resulted in class numbers being far smaller than before. Although this is not something we would ever have hoped for, a silver lining is that we have the opportunity to get to know our members better and give each individual more attention.

Class times

Many classes have been reduced in duration to allow for people exiting and entering the building at different times, and to ensure that there is appropriate time for cleaning of the workout space and equipment between pool sessions. A number of centres have not opened the change/shower facilities to ensure that members do not congregate in one area, while others have restricted the number of people able to use the changerooms. In my experience, it is not uncommon for aqua participants to simply wrap themselves in towels and head home to shower anyway, so for some the new restrictions have not impacted their routine. In the colder months, particularly, it is not ideal for participants to hang around in wet swimmers, so there's no harm in reminding them at the close of class that they should keep post-workout socialising both distanced and to a minimum and head straight home for a hot shower.

Booking system

Many clubs have implemented booking systems to control class numbers, with this system varying from facility to facility. Be aware that this development may cause anxiety among some of your older participants, especially if the system is online. If they lack confidence with using technology, they may harbour fears of missing out on their favourite session.

If the facility you work at has not already done so, it may be worth providing participants with some clearly written – and even illustrated – instructions detailing exactly how they can get online to reserve their spots in your class. During shutdown, when we



Image courtesy Christina White - aqua fitness instructor

Uplifting or funny messages written on the cones can soften the 'formality' of social distancing protocols

started delivering sessions online, I provided my aqua participants with written instructions on how to use zoom and was pleasantly surprised by how many older participants enthusiastically embraced this very different way of doing things. As we know, group workouts can be as much an opportunity to socialise as they are to exercise – and for many people isolation wasn't going to put a stop to that!

Staying fun and effective (as well as safe)

Here are some practical ideas/solutions to help keep the classes fun, safe, effective and engaging:

Spacing

To help with spacing, the lane ropes can be retained to ensure that each line of people is kept apart (most pool lanes are 2.5m wide). I have even seen one pool in South America that also places lane ropes across the swimming lanes, effectively creating a grid that gives each member their own square of workout space.

Alternately, different coloured cones or other items placed on deck and spaced the appropriate distance apart can be used to ensure that each participant has a marker to help them stay within their line. Uplifting messages or funny quotes can be placed on the cones to give them more meaning and take some of the 'formality' of simply social distancing away. We are in a health and wellness industry, mental perception is important.

Pool depth

Depth may be an issue where it wasn't previously. Due to participants being spaced further apart, and therefore out in their own workout zone, some may find themselves a little deeper or even shallower than they would normally be. If this is an inevitability in the class you teach and you have participants who are nervous exercising in deeper water, it may be worth asking at the start of the session for those who feel more comfortable working out in 'the deep' to volunteer to move to that area. To create a fully inclusive session for everyone, plan teaching tips for people that find themselves in transitional or deep water.

Swap travelling moves for stationary ones

In so far as class structure is concerned, for the time being it is a good idea to keep the participants on the spot. People 'travel' through

the water at different speeds depending on body composition and fitness levels, so it will be almost impossible to maintain the appropriate space once the water starts to move in a class environment and drifting begins to happen. There are many ways to add variety to a class without 'travel' and without equipment (should your centre not allow the use of it).

When teaching an aqua session, applying the following modifications to each move will create variation in intensity and movement patterns, without travelling:

Working position of the move – performing each movement in rebound, neutral or suspended will load the body in different ways and change the focus of the movement.

Surface area/speed – changing the shape of the body (e.g. hands – slice, fist, paddle, web) or the part of the body presented to the water, and varying the tempo to which the movement is performed, will also change the focus of the movement.

Around the body – using all planes of movement will give a balanced workout for the entire body.

Enlarge the movements – increasing the range of motion of each movement will almost certainly use more power, as drag forces increase. This is also a great way to encourage more flexibility around a joint.

Turn the movements – instead of adding

travel, face different directions. When your participants face in other directions it challenges them, as they may not be able to see you as clearly, therefore they may need to remember a routine and listen more intently to you (it may also have the added benefit of them cutting down on their talking to others!). It is a great way to look at their posture from another perspective.

During these changing times, as fitness professionals it is our role to adapt, be flexible and above all be compassionate. Many people will have strong feelings about COVID-19, including ourselves, and remaining neutral, following guidelines and being clear with our instructions will help people feel comfortable and happy to return to our sessions. **N**



Claire Barker-Hemings

Claire is a highly regarded aqua fitness exercise specialist, presenter and Pilates instructor. She trains people of all ages, sharing her passion and

knowledge of water, fitness and wellbeing. She has been teaching since 1997, planning and delivering aqua fitness workshops and new instructor training across Australia and internationally.



THE QUICK READ

- It is necessary for everyone on the team to follow a consistent approach to social distancing in classes to ensure that participants understand what is required of them
- Be prepared to teach sessions that don't require equipment, because even if the facility allows its use, some participants may not feel comfortable using equipment that others have used
- If the facility you work at has not already done so, it may be worth providing participants with some clearly written instructions detailing how they can get online to reserve their spot in class
- A number of techniques can be employed to prevent participants travelling in the water and contravening the facility's social distancing policy
- These techniques include lane marker ropes or marker cones on deck, as well as exercise modifications that create variation in intensity and movement patterns, without the need for travelling.





BEST PRACTICE FOR

WEARING FACEMASKS IN

THE GYM ENVIRONMENT

Handled incorrectly, masks can hinder rather than assist your best efforts to protect yourself and others in the gym from the spread of COVID and other viruses. *Dr Vincent Candrawinata PhD* looks at how to make mask wearing an effective exercise.

A sweat towel, a drink bottle and a good pair of runners used to be the gym bag essentials, but in today's climate a facemask is the new must-have accessory.

Any indoor activity involving close proximity to others carries with it a risk for transmission of viruses. Government regulations pertaining to social distancing and safety protocols, including mandatory gym floor supervision from hygiene marshals in some states, have been implemented to ensure that, despite the heavier breathing induced by exercise, those training and working in fitness facilities can do so in

a COVID-safe manner. Face masks or coverings are another weapon in the war against the spread of the virus.

Type of mask

In the fight against COVID-19, there are three types of mask to be aware of:

N95 respirator

This is the most restrictive type of mask, designed to have high efficiency filtering capabilities. Used in healthcare settings or in highly risky situations, it is not suitable for wearing when exercising. It is harder to

breathe while wearing it, particularly during exercise, and wearers are also likely to adjust the mask frequently, rendering it useless (see section below on handling of masks).

Surgical mask

A surgical mask is a loose-fitting, disposable device that creates a physical barrier between the mouth and nose of the wearer and potential contaminants in the immediate environment. A surgical mask can be comfortable enough for us to wear every day, including in the gym environment, because of the loose-fitting design. However, studies have shown that we do not

need the facemask to be of surgical grade to protect us from COVID-19 in most social interactions, especially when some sort of physical distancing is still observed.

Face covering

This is a physical barrier that we can wear over our nose and mouth to shield us from direct exposure to droplets. You can DIY this to make it as comfortable as possible, and it can also be washed and reused.

Face coverings of all types also stop us from directly touching our mouth and nose area, something we need to get used to.

Making your mask wearing effective

While facemasks are an important personal protection barrier, it is important to note that you have a higher risk of getting COVID if you wear a mask but don't use it appropriately – especially because when people wear a mask, they tend not to observe strict physical distancing. This behaviour is evident in a new study from behavioural scientists at the UK's University of Warwick, which found that, rather than exercising extra caution, people felt more comfortable sitting or standing closer to others while wearing a mask.

Regardless of what type of mask you are wearing, if mishandled, you can spread the virus from your mask to yourself. It is important, therefore, to follow some tips that will help you to use masks in a way that maximises safety for you and others.

Be careful how you handle your mask

If you go to your gym and opt wear a surgical facemask, dispose of it once you leave the premises. Do not take the mask into your car, do not put it back into your handbag or pocket and do not use your phone while wearing a mask (where your phone touches the mask or when you lower your mask to use your phone FACE ID). Place the mask in

a rubbish bin and then sanitise your hands immediately. Alternatively, if you wear a reusable face covering ensure you have a resealable carrier for it and follow cleaning directions after every use.

The mask acts as a barrier and catches germs and viruses. If you touch the mask with your hands after wearing it, you are infecting your hands.

Use a mask that suits your face and skin type

When you do go out and need to wear a mask, ensure the mask does not itch or irritate you. You will only end up playing and fidgeting with it, increasing the risk of catching the virus from your mask.

Take care when disposing of a used mask

Carry a good supply of masks around with you in a ziplock bag in your handbag or pocket. Carry another ziplock bag clearly marked 'USED' to safely house the mask that you have worn before you wash it or dispose of it.

Other considerations

In addition to wearing a mask or face covering, and following the steps to ensure you do so safely, there are some other simple behaviours to support a healthy gym and home life:

Don't leave home unless you absolutely need to

The reality is that the best way to avoid COVID is to not leave your home unless you absolutely need to. If you or your client is at high risk, conduct your sessions over-the-phone or on an online video streaming platform.

Set up your home to be COVID safe

Placing hand sanitiser at the front door is a good idea, because not all of us remember to wash our hands as soon as we get home from the gym. If possible, it is a good idea to invest in a coat rack for your foyer, on which

to hang your gym bag and jacket rather than putting them on your bed or in your wardrobe with your clean clothes.

Boost your immune system

Viruses spread in the body by attaching to your cells and infecting them. There is a significant link between the behaviour of antioxidants and their impact on cellular health. In order to keep your immune system strong and boosted, ensure your active lifestyle is supported by good nutrition, which may also include antioxidant-rich supplements such as activated phenolics. Strong and healthy cells are less susceptible to viruses.

Wearing a mask is our way to do our part in this fight against COVID. It is a new habit that we have to learn to get used to, but it is a minimal invasion of our daily life compared to the significant benefits of slowing the spread of the virus. **N**



Dr Vincent Cadrawinata, PhD

Vincent is a researcher, inventor and entrepreneur in the field of food, health and nutrition. Recognised by the Australian government as an Individual with a Distinguished Talent in Research and Academia, he founded Renovatio Bioscience using patented technology developed during his PhD research.

MORE

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Healthcare has simple, illustrated information on the correct way to put on facemasks. [Click here to see more.](#)



POWER MUSIC NOW

GROUP FITNESS MUSIC GOES MOBILE!

Get access to 10,000+ tracks and 750+ Pre-mixed albums, create unlimited custom Clickmixes and Playlists with the option to add music from your own device, interval timers, and change BPMs on the fly! 100% PPCA FREE!

Download on the
App Store

GET IT ON
Google Play



START YOUR FREE
TRIAL TODAY!

PowerMusic.com



@POWERMUSIC



@FACEBOOK.COM/POWERMUSICINC



THIS WAS GX IN LOCKDOWN

Shutdown prompted us all to improvise how we worked and how we maintained our connections. Here, aqua and group fitness instructors *Lianne Tiemens* and *Dominic Gili* share how they approached the challenge.

Lianne Tiemens, Group Exercise & Aqua Instructor

What did you do during shutdown?

On Monday 23 March 2020 I finished delivering my last gym-based group fitness class around 11:30am, a team teach with a friend to launch Les Mills BODYPUMP 113. When we left the gym around midday the gym closed its doors. Earlier that morning I received the first messages from my regular gym participants with requests to continue training them, and that's exactly what I decided to do – take my classes virtual. That afternoon I sent out an invite to another bunch of regulars who have become friends and set up some trial classes with them for later that week. To make myself stick to it, I posted an announcement on my socials.

How did you facilitate it?

During a trial week I researched booking systems, payment systems, the technology side of things and how to integrate them all so I could offer a long-term and sustainable solution with efficient processes eliminating as much additional admin work as I could. I listened to webinars, did research online and connected with colleagues who were going virtual too. I also checked insurance for coverage and organised updated legal terms & conditions for my services. I settled on booking system Calendly which allows for integrations

2020-W16 ★ WORKOUT FOCUS: 5 MISS CHALLENGES

VIRTUAL GROUP CLASS TIMETABLE

FUNCTIONAL MOVEMENT CLASSES
Full body, low impact workouts focusing on functional movement patterns. A land based alternative for our Aqua Fitness Communities. All fitness levels welcome.

WEDNESDAY 15/4, 9.15AM 11 OF AKA 10P
SATURDAY 18/4, 8.30AM

HIIT
Full body, high-impact HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training) using body weight. Suitable alternative for Basic Training class.

THURSDAY 16/4, 5.30PM
SATURDAY 18/4, 9.30AM 10P 11P
SATURDAY 18/4, 10.30AM

TO BOOK YOUR SPOT GO TO [CALENDLY.COM/LATIEMENS](https://calendly.com/latiemens) ←

LIANNE TIEMENS - GROUP FITNESS

with payment system PayPal and video conferencing software Zoom. I also ran tests with booking, payment and video conferencing through these systems with my trial squad.

What sound and music system did you use?

During the trial classes it turned out that the standard microphone and camera of my laptop were not fantastic. One of my friends offered his external camera, resulting in a much better sound and image quality. During the classes I share my computer sound through Zoom, playing my virtual class licensed music on my PC.

How regularly did you do it?

The business of virtual group fitness from home is a combined effort from all members of my young family. Before each class the living room gets transformed into a makeshift studio and the rest of the family is temporarily relocated. My schedule is very much dependent on our family schedules.

I started with 3 evening classes and 2 morning classes. After a couple of weeks of running classes I wanted to see whether the aqua fitness communities were game for this form of training as well. Much to my amazement in these first trial classes up to 40+ participants dialled in! Some were a bit nervous about it, but in the end they all managed to join in. This included a number of 80+ years old participants. The feedback was that they wanted more. I then added 2 morning classes to the timetable catering for these communities. I reached the point at which I was delivering 2 evening and 4 morning classes per week.

How did you promote it?

Word of mouth as well as Facebook and Instagram – though, frankly, I haven't quite nailed the socials yet (because how many hours can you spend on your devices whilst you're trying to teach your kids to get off them?!)



How did people respond?

Participants have shared that they appreciate the fact that someone is coaching and motivating them, rather than them looking at a screen and following instructions from a trainer they don't know in a video. Offering individual options is another thing they greatly appreciate. As a trainer, having participants that you already know in the virtual classes has been very helpful, because you know how they move and what they can and can't do, which makes coaching easier and more effective. Participants are grateful to have the option to continue training with a trainer they know and trust. Having to book in and pay actually works also, as it commits them to the workout.

What's your approach to pricing?

All my classes are on a pay per view basis. The Virtual Group Functional Movement Sessions are at a reduced rate, as these are aimed at seniors.

Did you gain any new participants?

During the first month of virtual classes I picked up a handful of new participants, all family members or friends from my regular participants. Some even located in Colombia! One family member starts doing the classes and the others see them do it and then the next session they are joining in too. It's great to see sons, daughters and/or partners join in, who otherwise may have not done a workout. We love seeing dogs, cats and young kids in our classes too. They tend to either chase participants or steal their mats, which can result in some hilarious footage and definitely adds to the fun. Added bonus, it makes us feel normal and proves that we are all trying to make things work.

How many people are getting involved?

Saturday mornings are my busiest classes. The 9:30am Virtual Group HIIT Class has been booked out every week and numbers of the 8:30am Virtual Functional Movement Sessions on Saturday morning as well as Wednesday mornings are close to capacity and still climbing. Initially I capped my classes at 10, but I increased capacity, it varies between class types. I have now capped each class at a capacity at which I can comfortably support participants and offer some form of personalised coaching and add elements of interaction.

Is participant technique an issue with remote virtual sessions?

By capping my classes, I'm aiming to ensure I don't have more participants than I can coach. Participants set their cameras up in a way that I can watch their form. I demonstrate the exercises and the options in the first rounds and then move towards the laptop/camera to coach, correct form and, where needed, offer modifications or alternative moves. I prefer to use gallery view on both ends (participant's screen and mine) which allows me to add elements of interaction between participants. For my groups, I believe it's important to see others move, as it's motivating and makes you feel like you are not alone.

What pros and cons have you noticed?

PROS

It is fantastic to be able to stay connected with my participants and share the physical and mental benefits of fitness. I am grateful for the opportunity and the push it has given me to put myself out there. There is definitely a place for virtual classes in our world, during and post COVID-19.

I love how the fitness community is supportive of all its members and has really rallied together. There is a real sense of community from within this community and employers and peers have been



very supportive and generous in sharing knowledge and experience.

CONS

Someone compared it to listening to a playlist at home or going to a live gig. It's very good, and much, much better than you think it may be, but nothing really beats the energy of a group fitness studio with real-life participants.

Would you continue with the virtual sessions beyond shutdown?

I started with the basics, as soon as I could. I am continuing to improve my systems and offering. I do believe that we, fitness professionals, are in a position where we can flip our situation. I believe that we won't just go back to where we left off. We won't be able to return to the normal that we used to know just like that, because, for one thing, gyms are reopening at a reduced capacity.

We need to be aware and we need to be prepared. On the other hand, more and more people are getting active and moving. There will be an emphasis on health and fitness post COVID-19

This situation allows for creativity and an opportunity to change, and I will certainly continue to challenge myself to continue to adapt to the evolving situation both in the virtually spheres and in real-life.

Dominic Gili, Aqua Instructor & Educator

What did you do during shutdown?

After not teaching for several days I noticed I was keen to listen to music at home (which I don't normally do, as for me music=work). Then, when I played a fun dance song and shared it on Facebook I thought how much fun it would be if I could dance with all the people that commented. That was the brainwave for #ZoomHouseParty. I posted about the idea and others seemed interested, so we tried it the next day and continued every morning throughout lockdown, for 20 minutes.

How did you facilitate it?

My friend and colleague Claire Barker-Hemings took on the role of host for the Zoom meetings, while I'd DJ and post a link and passcode each morning.

What sound and music system did you use?

I go into advanced setting in Zoom and share computer audio. I've been asked so many times how we do it that I made a video tutorial!

How did you promote it?

I spread the word via several groups on Facebook, as well as on Instagram, through my regular AquaFitnessOnline newsletter and word of mouth.

How did people respond?

People love it. I get messages regularly thanking me saying that it's the only reason they get out of bed. It energises them throughout the day and gives them a sense of connection with others. Everyone is smiling, dancing and laughing as many participants allow themselves to get silly, dance with their kids, pets and stuffed toys. When I played Madonna's Vogue, one dancer got two funnels out and danced with them on her chest! People seemed to let loose, dancing like no-one is watching. People often log in 5-10 mins early and we say hi, chat and welcome new people.

How many people are getting involved?

We'd get around 25-35 dancers each day. Some dance everyday, others a few days a week. Everyone was welcome. Most people are aqua instructors or participants, or friends of one of the regulars. Most are from around Australia, but we have regulars from the USA, New Zealand and a friend travelling in Costa Rica even joins us when she can get good WiFi. I even got a special request from an aqua instructor from Perth and hosted a 60th birthday #ZoomHouseParty for her, her friends and participants at 4:30pm Perth time!

Is participant technique an issue with remote virtual sessions?

For our sessions, there's no technique required because it's freestyle dancing! People can do whatever they like, whenever they like. Some do the first 10 mins and then leave for a work meeting, some dance a little and then sit a little. Others go crazy for 20 minutes. One dancer regularly uses her watch to count steps and often does up to 2,500 steps in 20 minutes.

What's your approach to pricing?

This party is free!

Would you continue with the virtual sessions beyond shutdown?

Probably not as regularly, though it might be fun to do it occasionally. **N**



Dominic Gili

Dom is an award-winning aqua fitness specialist with a reputation for offering innovative, engaging and challenging water workouts. The owner of AquaFitnessOnline.com, he also delivers aqua fitness workshops and masterclasses worldwide. In 2012 Dom was named 'Author of the Year' by Australian Fitness Network.



Lianne Tiemens

Lianne is a Group Fitness Leader, PT and aqua presenter. A passionate, motivating and in-demand instructor and mentor at leading gyms and aquatic centres across Sydney, she specialises in land- and water-based group HIIT workouts. In 2019 Lianne received Fitness First's Q3 National Group Fitness Instructor of the Quarter Award.





MASSAGE ESSENTIALS FOR FITNESS PROFESSIONALS

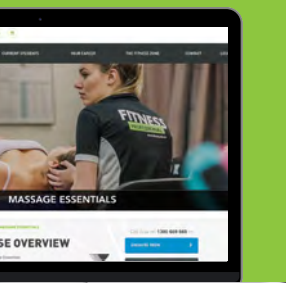
Are you wanting to help your clients to:
Gain better results? Recover faster?
OR manage their injuries better?

The Institute's newest certification, Massage Essentials is for YOU!

Massage Essentials is a short course program providing the latest, safest and most effective way for Fitness Professionals to administer a fundamental level of massage that can be readily applied to their client base.

It will provide Fitness Professionals with the ability to provide general health maintenance treatments, assist clients in recovery from training and manage minor injuries, operating within their scope of practice whilst being able to generate additional income by providing Swedish Massage treatments, seated massage, sports massage, taping and more.

RTO ID: 121508




**NEED MORE
INFORMATION?**

 **VISIT OUR WEBSITE**



**CALL US
TODAY!**

 **1300 669 669**

WALK TOGETHER NURTURING COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH CLIENTS

When clients hit a plateau or engage in unhelpful behaviours, you can assist them to move on by nurturing a collaborative relationship in which they feel unconditionally supported, writes PT and performance coach *Susy Natal*.

*This is the second article on the often-overlooked topic of softer coaching skills (following *You are not your client*), which will not teach a client how to squat, but can empower them to stop jeopardising their own success.*

Any client that you work with is on a health and fitness journey, and you are on it with them. It is not yours to commandeer, but you are an active part of it, so the ways you engage and relate to your client and their behaviour can seriously impact their success. Your client could be trying to do this alone, but they have chosen to include you in the process, so do everything in your power to help them succeed.

Make the connection

Rapport and trust are gradually built over time, and as the guide in the client-trainer relationship it is your responsibility to gently and authentically do your part to nurture these.

Listen

In a previous article, *You Are Not Your Client*, active listening was

“
Your client could be trying to do this alone, but they have chosen to include you in the process
”



Nothing will make you a better listener than learning to tune out the things happening on your phone and in your surroundings when a client is talking to you



THE QUICK READ

- Take responsibility for nurturing trust and rapport with your client and give them your undivided attention
- Listen to everything that your client says and watch your client's nonverbal behaviours when they communicate with you
- Pre-emptive coaching mechanisms that can help your client get through the inevitable difficult phases will be very valuable
- Teaching your client about goal ownership will empower them to realise that they always have the option to choose differently
- Help your client get in the habit of celebrating their victories along the way
- Always be mindful of your communication when things are particularly tough: there is never any excuse for unkindness, so if you ever feel out of your depth, referring out is the ethical choice
- When a client feels stuck, you can help get them get moving again by reframing a situation in a way that will increase their ability to make objective assessments and decisions about it
- Drilling down on the specifics of a problem can help your client pull back from overwhelm, identify the true issue, and work their way out of the problem space.

discussed, but this is something worth revisiting. What your client chooses to tell you, how they phrase what they say, and what they choose to omit can give away a lot about where the client is at. The more effort you have put into building rapport, the more they will feel they can be open and honest with you. The more they feel that you truly care about what they have to say, the more effectively you will be able to help, because they will feel comfortable enough to open up and share personal information.

Pay attention to nonverbals

We do not only listen with our ears – we also listen with our eyes. Watch closely whenever your client is talking, as their nonverbal behaviours will also be telling a story. For example, somebody who suddenly starts to sway or shift from foot to foot repeatedly when they were previously quite still might be nervous or stressed about what they have started to speak or think about. Somebody who starts to look away, at their watch or toward the exit might not be comfortable with the current topic of discussion.

Check whether you are reading the room right

You will not always correctly interpret a client's body language, but if you spot something, bring it up in a non-confrontational manner to help continue guiding a conversation forward. Even when incorrect, your client may clarify and will at very least see that you are trying to understand and to help, which can also nurture rapport. For example, with the client who starts to sway, you may say something like 'I notice that you seem a bit more restless than a moment ago – do you feel stressed when you think about this?'. If this is the right interpretation, the client will feel more deeply understood, which may help the conversation progress. It may even help the client have a moment of realisation about how they feel about a topic, that they were not completely in touch with beforehand.

Check yourself before you wreck the connection

Our own body language says a lot about how we are listening. If you've ever spoken to someone who kept looking over your shoulder or at their phone, you'll know only too well how unimportant it makes you feel. Look at your client and have your body turned towards them. Nothing will make you a better listener than learning to tune out the things happening on your phone and in your surroundings when a client is talking to you.

This is the point at which many people will bring up the concept of 'mirroring' your client's behaviours, but anything staged is not genuine and a client who is attuned to your body language will immediately lose trust if they realise that you are putting techniques on them. It may sound less fancy, but it is far more authentic to simply give your client your total and undivided attention!

When the going gets tough

Once you have established a trusting relationship with your client, they will likely reach a moment where they either get stuck or fall off the wagon – to a degree at least. There are many things that you can put in place along the way to help them navigate through the rocky waters when they do hit them.

Celebrate the little wins

Many people are not well accustomed to seeing, let alone, celebrating their smaller victories on their path to a bigger goal. Health does not really have an endpoint, but rather happens in phases, so it can feel exhausting and relentless if it is just an endless tunnel of work



with no victories. Congratulate your client or remind them that they have done something that is worth being proud of, but be careful to keep your language about them: it is their place to be proud of themselves, not yours. Rather, you can congratulate, encourage and be impressed.

Make sure they know the wins are THEIRS

A client who slips up has no place apologising to you, and a client who is doing well has no place saying that their progress is thanks to you. It is not about you! Absolutely accept thanks for being a helpful guide, but be careful that this boundary does not become blurred into thinking that you have done anything more than that, as it does the client an enormous disservice by taking their power away. We work hard as coaches, but ultimately only the clients who put in the work get the results, so the victory belongs to them.

Encourage the client to take ownership

It goes a long way to regularly remind the client that they are in charge and that you do not own their goal for them – they will have the autonomy to change their mind about a goal and therefore to also accept responsibility for the positive and negative consequences of that choice, should they arise. If they slip up, they will be more willing to admit responsibility with compassion but ownership. If they make progress, they will also be able to see that they have made that achievement with purpose, not chance. People who are more aware of their autonomy tend to take more ownership and responsibility over their own life, and consequently to achieve more.

Offer only constructive feedback – no matter how you feel

It is normal to feel frustrated if a client is repeatedly making the same mistakes. It is, however, not fair to make it about you and become combative with the client just because they are not behaving as you would like them to. A client who is struggling is not wasting your time, nor trying to antagonise you. Remember that your outcome is to help the client, and that means working through the struggle together. Keep your feedback constructive, respectful and compassionate. This is how real change occurs.

When in doubt, refer out

A client who is struggling on a more serious level may very well be working through some mindset demons that are beyond what you are qualified to manage. It then becomes your responsibility to suggest expanding their wellbeing team to include a psychologist or counsellor. As with any other matter, once you notice that something is beyond your scope of practice then your ethical duty of care is to refer out. This does not necessarily mean you need to stop training them, but rather to engage in collaborative teamwork with any other members of their wellbeing team to help the client meet their needs.

Advanced techniques

There are many involved techniques for that require additional study. However, there are a few that, with practice, you can use to effectively guide your clients through moments of struggle.



A client who is struggling is not wasting your time, nor trying to antagonise you



Offer a reframe

Usually, when a client is struggling to work through a situation it will be because they are becoming overly emotional about it. This can make them struggle to take a step back to view the situation with objectivity. Presenting the same scenario from a different perspective can help to create the distance necessary for the client to feel less emotional and work through the roadblock. A common helpful reframe is to ask a client what they would advise a friend experiencing a similar situation. Where they might beat themselves up for struggling to get all their scheduled workouts in for the week, they would likely reassure a friend in the same situation that they did do some workouts, praise them for that, and encourage them to find resolve and prioritise a time to fit the missing sessions in, where practical.

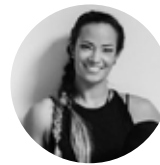
Drill down to the specifics

Emotional upset can make the mind operate in generalisations. This is when you are more likely to hear a client say things like 'I always mess it up', 'Nothing ever goes right', or 'Everything is terrible'. These are all examples of 'globalisations' in which the perception becomes that the problem has no boundaries and is all-encompassing. Getting specific with a client will not fix the

problem, but can at least establish where the boundaries of the problem are and enable them to pull back from total overwhelm about the situation. Then 'Nothing ever goes right' can become 'I'm having a difficult start to the week. I slept poorly on Sunday, so began my Monday tired and disorganised. I got into trouble at work for being late, which was frustrating because I work so hard and was only ten minutes late. In the rush I forgot my lunch and my gym clothes, and I ate junk food for lunch and missed my Monday workout, so am not feeling great'.

Arrive at action

Once you have pulled back from the global and managed to drill down to the specifics of the problem, work together with your client to figure out what the next most logical step is. This should be something that the client is willing to do to help start moving them out of the problem space. When multiple options exist, begin with only one single point of action to prevent overwhelm, and choose the easiest available task so that the client feels confident and capable in their ability to move from planning into execution. Remember to ask how you can support them through this shift into action so you can move together into the next phase of the client's goal. **N**



Susy Natal

Susy is a Sydney-based performance coach, personal trainer, wellness writer and convention presenter. With a background in psychology and a focus on strength training for females, her integrated approach to training helps clients ranging from beginners to athletes achieve strength of body and mind.



WOMEN AREN'T JUST 'LITTLE MEN'.

FITNESS MASTERY SERIES: ULTIMATE WOMEN'S TRAINING TOOLBOX

\$119 for Network Members

5 CECs/CPDs

Hormonal, metabolic, cognitive, and behavioural differences abound that set your female clients apart from their male counterparts, all of which influence the way they train and the results they seek.

From mental health, menopause and mindset, to pelvic floor and programming, the Ultimate Women's Training Toolbox covers the critical ages, stages and specific considerations that every women's fitness professional should know.



THIS FIVE-PART ONLINE VIDEO COURSE:

- ▶ Teaches the specific anatomical and physiological details that make women and men so incredibly different
- ▶ Uncovers the complex relationship that exists between self-esteem, food, body image, exercise, menstruation and mental health for training and coaching
- ▶ Explores specific progressive overload techniques for developing female-centric training programs
- ▶ Explains the physical and psychological changes experienced by women in their 40's, 50's and beyond, and reveals how this impacts their training approach.

...and more.

[CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS AND TO GET STARTED](#)

REAL WORLD PT

ALANA COOMER
ONLINE COACH
QLD



A SNAPSHOT OF HOW TODAY'S PERSONAL TRAINERS ARE WORKING, LIVING AND SHAPING THEIR CAREERS

? What's your business called?

Abs By Alana. You can check us out at absbyalana.com and [instagram.com/absbyalana](https://www.instagram.com/absbyalana) and [facebook.com/absbyalana](https://www.facebook.com/absbyalana)

? How long have you been a PT?

Just over 2 years.

? Are you full time or part time?

This is my full time job.

? What made you decide to become a trainer?

I have been competing in bodybuilding shows as a bikini/fitness competitor since 2016. Before long, this passion became a lifestyle. Now I am a personal trainer/online coach who aims to instil as many people as possible with the level of confidence and self-esteem that competing has allowed me to build.

? Do you specialise?

In addition to being a personal trainer, I am also an ISSN-qualified sports nutritionist. I specialise in providing clients with a structured program and personalised macronutrients using a flexible dieting approach to achieve their goals.

? Do you have a signature style of training?

Resistance training is my signature style.

? How many hours do you train clients for each week?

I no longer work face-to-face hours at a gym, since my online coaching business grew. I now work with hundreds of women all around the world, which keeps me very busy!

? How many hours do you spend working on your business?

I am guilty of over-working due to loving my job so much! Sometimes I find myself working 12+ hour days, but I am trying to improve my work/life balance. My job is certainly my passion!

? What hours do you work?

My official working hours are 9am-6:30pm, but I am available to my clients 24/7 should they have any questions.

? What do you do in any downtime during the day?

In my downtime I love to train. This is my opportunity to switch off. I also enjoy taking my sausage dog Arnie for walks to get some fresh air!

? What are your rates?

Pricing is available on my website through downloading a client information pack at absbyalana.com/online-coaching

? What do you do in terms of your ongoing education?

Since attaining my Certificate IV in Personal Training, I have undergone further study in nutrition to expand my

knowledge and skills as a coach. A requirement of retaining my ISSN Sports Nutrition Certificate is ongoing study each year. I also do extensive research into training styles, mindset and marketing to improve my business.

? How long, on average do your clients stay with you?

My longest client has been with me for just over a year and a half! Most of the women I work with are long-term clients, as sustainable results take time.

? How do you get new clients?

I am currently at capacity with clientele for online coaching, so I no longer market myself and haven't for quite some time. I am incredibly grateful to have clients who refer people on to Abs By Alana. Word-of-mouth referrals and social media have certainly been a powerful means for growing my business.

? Do you vet clients before you agree to train them?

Each client must answer an extensive health and fitness questionnaire to rule out any medical conditions or relevant injuries before I agree to train them.

? Do you ever turn clients away or refer them to other PTs?

Absolutely! If I deem any client to be beyond my scope, I most certainly refer them on to the appropriate health professional. I never want to put the health of a client at risk or jeopardise my reputation simply to onboard another client.

? What differentiates you from other trainers?

I believe that what differentiates me from other trainers is my desire to help others succeed. I am extremely accessible to all of my clients



There are people out there just waiting for someone like you to help transform their lives, and there is no better feeling than that!



and establish very close relationships with them. I consider my clients to be friends and always have their best interests at heart.

? What is the best thing about being a PT?

Sharing in your clients' journeys to becoming stronger, happier, healthier, and more confident versions of themselves. It's incredibly rewarding!

? And the hardest?

I become extremely invested in all of my clients, so I find it difficult when a client isn't as invested in their success as I am. At the end of the day, the client must be willing to put in the work to succeed.

? What's the biggest misconception about working in fitness?

I think the biggest misconception about working in the fitness industry is the flexibility. It is assumed that most trainers only work mornings and nights, or one or the other. Most coaches I know work more than full-time hours.

? Where would you like your career to take you?

Ultimately my goal is to empower and educate as many people as possible. As I am

only one person, I am quickly learning that this will require me to expand and hire more coaches. I have a new coach coming on board the Abs By Alana team in September, which I am very excited about.

? What is your fitness philosophy?

'If you don't see yourself doing it for life, don't start it'. Health and fitness should be a lifestyle, not a quick fix. If your approach isn't enjoyable, it won't be maintainable long-term. Find an approach that you enjoy because you will be far more likely to stick to it!

? What advice would you give to someone starting out as a PT?

If you have a genuine love for helping people and are passionate about health and fitness, this career path will be extremely rewarding. Personal training can certainly be unpredictable and inconsistent in the beginning until you build up a client base, but don't give up! There are people out there just waiting for someone like you to help transform their lives, and there is no better feeling than that! **N**

Want to be a future featured Real World PT? For details email



I JUST WANNA HUG SOMEBODY (BUT I WON'T) THE REALITIES OF CLUB REOPENING

Three months after reopening her clubs post-isolation shutdown, Group Exercise Manager *Leisl Klaebe* looks at how the experience has been for both staff and members.

Three months ago, we reopened our Virgin Active clubs post-isolation. The return has been universally met with joy by members and staff alike, and the hardest thing has been not to hug everybody! When your club has a great culture and your workmates feel like family, social distancing takes some self-control.

The reopening checklist

Preparing to reopen was undeniably very hard work for everyone, with a long list of health and safety protocols to put in place, and numerous new procedures to both execute and train teams to deliver. The list of tasks was long and time was short. We were also faced with the challenge of galvanising ourselves and our staff to work at pace after nearly three months of a quieter, slower routine working remotely.

The reopening checklist included:

- Getting decals and signage designed and made for messaging in the clubs
- Measuring and creating social-distancing compliant spaces
- Putting in place procedures for social distancing in each newly created space within the clubs
- Relocating or putting into storage non-essential equipment
- Purchasing temperature checking equipment and creating accompanying logs
- Facilitate training in all new procedures and protocols to staff across all departments
- Recreating and reloading timetables and, for the first time, implementing gym floor booking spaces.

And this was just the tip of the iceberg. The club reopening checklist was substantial across all departments.

Staff responsibilities

Group exercise coaches were given program-specific training on how to deliver post-isolation classes without physical contact, with social distancing and extra health and safety protocols.

Customer service and sales staff had role play training on how to answer challenging member questions regarding coming back into their clubs, as well as training on taking member and staff temperatures on entry.

PT's had to almost start from scratch to re-establish their client base. The operations team suddenly had cleaning duties after every single class in addition to on the hour and 3-4 hourly. They were also tasked with installing the new decals and signage, hand sanitiser units, wipe dispensers and closed bins.

MORE

Click [HERE](#) to read Leisl's companion to this article, her Perspective feature from the Winter 2020 issue of Network magazine, 'Don't forget the people: Returning to our clubs after the shutdown'



Suffice to say, the way we ran our clubs day-to-day changed in lots of little ways.

We reopened with the mantra ‘forget about your job description’. Everybody just pitched in and did what needed to be done, and that is still the case. Work life has by no means returned to normal or settled into a ‘new normal’. Constant assessment, discussion and adjustment are the order of the day, and will be for quite some time.

Staff have totally nailed all the new hygiene, cleaning and social distancing protocols, and group exercise coaches have been stoked to be doing what they love again. Far from being annoyed with all the new procedures, members have expressed gratitude for the amount of cleaning and safe exercise measures we have implemented. No-one has seemed anxious, nervous or uncomfortable to be back in club. Arguably, those that might be concerned are still on a membership freeze or may have cancelled. Overridingly, member feedback has been that it is good to be back, to be moving again and to be reunited with their fitness community. Importantly, they also feel safe, and like we are taking very good care of them.

Evolving timetables and classes

We opened all our clubs with a strong timetable offering, predicting 70% of members would return. We learnt some quick lessons upon reopening, however: the CBD remains very quiet, and we soon realised we had scheduled too many classes, while, conversely, we needed to add more classes to our suburban clubs.

Our Sydney CBD clubs opened on 15 June 2020 with class occupancy in the first week of 33-35%, but with group exercise penetration at 90%, illustrating the fact that those in the city who were choosing to return to our clubs were prioritising group workouts over gym floor training. By comparison, our suburban clubs had class occupancy of 50-60% but group exercise penetration of 70-80%. By

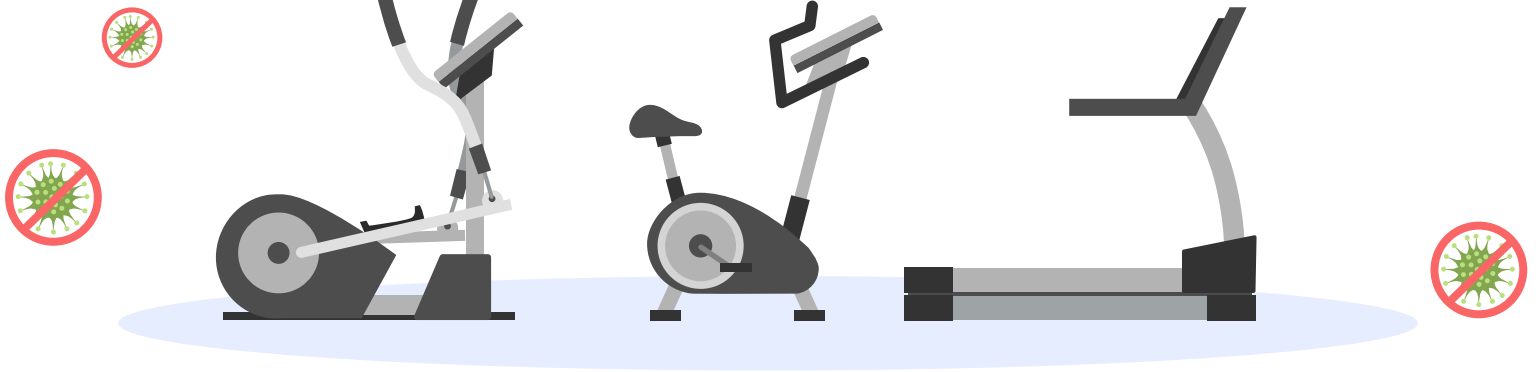
July all our newer urban clubs had a group exercise penetration of 90%, while our older suburban clubs had 70-80%.

So, fewer people were returning to the city clubs than to the suburban clubs – but those that were returning were more inclined to be group exercisers than gym floor trainers.

The reason for CBD club traffic being lower than that in the suburbs is understandable. Many businesses have no date set for workers to return to their office, have set dates as late as November for select staff to return, or implemented a staff rotation policy that sees different staff returning to the workplace on different days of the week. It is also noticeable that more offices are now up for lease in the CBD, as businesses opt to save on rent by running their operations more cost-effectively remotely.

Some companies have brought back some staff rostered on shifts from 7am, 8am, 9am and 10am rather than having them all start at the same time, as it would take too long to get all staff up to their offices with the current restrictions on how many people can be in a lift together. Other businesses, meanwhile, have done ‘early bird’ parking deals, so many workers are leaving the CBD early, leaving the PM peak classes and gym floor extremely quiet. AM and lunch peaks, however, have been better attended and all peaks are definitely growing as the weeks pass, with an increase expected in July and particularly after the July school holidays. In early July we have started to see more members swiping in outside the heart of each peak.

We have had to add additional classes to suburban clubs in the Hills, Moore Park, St Leonards and Bondi, as all those yet to return to working in their usual city offices and exercising in city clubs are working out in the clubs near to their homes rather than their workplaces. They are keen as beans to get back to classes, but with fewer participants



Those in the city who were choosing to return to our clubs were prioritising group workouts over gym floor training



allowed in each class, we've had to increase the number of classes on offer in order to accommodate member demand.

The Victorian situation

Our Melbourne clubs opened on 22 June and closed again two and a half weeks later on 9 July due to the resurgence of COVID cases and reintroduction of Stage 3 Lockdown for six weeks. Our hearts went out to our colleagues and members in Victoria – such tough times and very challenging for everyone. That being said, people are Virgin's first concern, and this needs to happen to keep everyone safe, so we will regroup and re-emerge after this new lockdown and live to fight another day! This Stage 3 Lockdown in Victoria brought some nervousness to NSW, but we took it one day at a time, continuing to do what we do well and delivering great exercise experiences.

A heightened focus on health

More than ever, everyone's health is a priority. We all need to move more, boost our immunity, support our mental health and stay physically strong. The bonus of doing this with a side helping of socialisation and community connection has brought members back to clubs in droves. The safety of our staff and members is our priority, accompanied by respect for how people may be feeling differently about returning to clubs at this time.

Mandatory temperature checks for staff have ensured that those of us who would have soldiered on when mildly ill in the past, have had to prioritise our own health and stay at home to rest (which arguably we should have always done).

There is no 'new normal'

The art of disruption is to offer members what they need before they know they need it. To this end, constant inter-team communication has been the key to predicting member behaviour and getting on the front foot with changes. Sales, customer services, operations, group exercise, PT and senior managers have all been conversing regularly to ensure we are doing what our members need.

There is no new normal. We have had to be nimble in our responses to the market. We are analysing statistics on member behaviour daily in order to anticipate needs and be responsive. Adjustments are constant, with class additions, subtractions or changes, and amendments to class booking rules and restrictions (to keep things fair for members), as well as to cleaning procedures to ensure staff can cope with the increased workload while still delivering exceptional standards of care for our members.

Unexpected challenges

While many challenges were anticipated upon return, others were not.

Booking

Member booking behaviour has been completely different, with many booking at the last minute or booking and then not showing for class. Analysing and overcoming this challenge is currently where our heads are at.

Music volume

Interestingly, some members have found a return to the usual studio music volume a bit of a shock after the quietness of isolation and we have chosen to reduce music volume in select classes to allow members to adjust.

Personal space

A class that previously accommodated 24 people was reopened with 16 people and then, based on member feedback, further reduced to 14 people per class to ensure everyone had the room to exercise and feel safe while they did it.

Staff work/life balance

Some clubs have seen a drop-off of some staff over the three months of isolation, for a range of reasons, and it has also been common for many to have used that time to reassess their work/life balance and choose a modified way of working on their return. This has required adjustments to be made to club staffing levels and to timetables. Knowing that people's work/life balance is front of mind, and will likely continue to be, has meant that we need to work a little differently and accommodate this important change.

Cycle dilemmas

Cycle floor coaching is tough to execute, due to having to keep 1.5m between participants. This does affect how classes are delivered for some program styles, and we are currently re-assessing how we do this during this time.

Hands-on technique assistance

Yoga and Reformer Pilates hands-on adjustments, or member assistance, are a thing of the past, and this brings challenges for our mind body coaches.

More program-specific training has also been delivered to our teams by our Head Coaches. Despite the mammoth task to re-open our clubs, everyone has had a smile on their dial and couldn't be happier to be back. It is true that when you love what you do, it doesn't feel like work, even in times of adversity. **N**



Leisl Klaebe

Leisl is the Group Exercise Manager of three Virgin Active clubs in the Sydney CBD. She manages a timetable of over 400 classes a week and a team of over 70 GEX coaches. With close to 20 years' experience in the health and fitness industry, Leisl is a well-respected motivational leader and a former recipient of the prestigious Virgin Star Award. She has recently been appointed Global Ambassador for the Women in Fitness Association.



LISTEN UP!

A roundup of the recent episodes of The Fitness Industry Podcast, powered by Australian Fitness Network. Click to listen directly, and subscribe at Soundcloud or Apple Podcasts.



Real 'Happy meals' for brighter brains

with Kristen Beck

Nutritionist and exercise scientist Kristen Beck has over 20 years' experience in the nutrition, supplement and fitness industries. Here, she chats about nutrition and brain health; adrenal fatigue and severe anxiety; the calming effect of a healthy gut microbiome; and how eating more vegies is the first step to a happier brain!

[LISTEN HERE](#)



Periodised programming for everyday clients

with Brodie Hicks

Strength and conditioning coach Brodie Hicks has a wealth of experience in using periodised programming for the general population as well as with elite athletes. Here, he chats about linear and non-linear periodisation; macro-, micro- and meso-cycles; focusing on volume before intensity and simple before complex; and breaking down big goals into manageable phases.

[LISTEN HERE](#)



Respect the nerves

with Merrin Martin

Physiotherapist Merrin Martin has been helping clients to rehabilitate fitness, sport and dance-related injuries for two decades. In this episode she talks about the role of the nervous system, holding stretches and neural tension, how injuries interrupt nerve pathways, and the effects of pressure and traction force on the nerves.

[LISTEN HERE](#)



Pilates exercises can enhance every PT's strength training

with Stephanie Glickman

Stephanie Glickman is a Pilates instructor trainer whose own studio combines clinical Pilates, group reformer, mat classes and strength training. Here, she discusses the benefits to PTs of adding Pilates moves to regular strength training programs, how the exercises can help with body lines and mobility, and busting trainers' misconceptions about Pilates.

[LISTEN HERE](#)



The beauty of striving for perfect technique

with Hays Daewoud

Martial arts coach and educator Hays Daewoud trained fighters to win international titles before switching his focus to boxing-for-fitness. Here, he talks about bringing the focus back to boxing skills; the importance of evidence-based practice; and aiming for perfection in technique, even when you're boxing-for-fitness, not competition.

[LISTEN HERE](#)



Fasting, food choices and future health directions

with Professor Grant Schofield

A Professor of Public Health, Grant Schofield is well-known for his work around low carb and ketogenic eating. Here, he talks about fasting, nutritional ketosis and autophagy; resisting junk food promotions; and the huge impact that switching 10% of the nation's health budget from treatment to prevention could have.

[LISTEN HERE](#)

BAKED RICOTTA SALAD & COCONUT SORBET

Teresa Cutter, The Healthy Chef, shares her recipes for a vibrant lunch that even salad sceptics will salivate over, and a beautifully fresh, simple, yet indulgent dessert.

Baked ricotta with figs, pear and walnuts

A wonderful salad for simple impromptu entertaining. Serve baked ricotta straight from the oven and accompany with seasonal ingredients and good quality sourdough.

Serves 4

Ingredients

500g good quality firm ricotta
extra virgin olive oil for drizzling
2 generous handfuls rocket leaves or leafy greens
3 fresh figs, halved or sliced
1 pear, thinly sliced
60g roasted walnuts
few sprigs thyme

LEMON DRESSING

1 lemon, juiced
1 teaspoon honey
1 teaspoon tahini
60ml extra virgin olive oil
sea salt to taste

Method

1. Preheat your oven to 180°C fan forced.
2. Turn out the ricotta into an oven-proof fry pan lined with baking paper.
3. Drizzle generously with olive oil and bake for 30 minutes until golden.
4. Remove the ricotta and carefully place onto a serving plate.
5. Arrange over the salad leaves, figs, pear and walnuts.
6. Combine dressing ingredients and drizzle over the salad leaves and ricotta.

Notes and inspiration: Add a handful of green seedless grapes or Sicilian olives. Use pan roasted haloumi in place of ricotta.



Coconut milk sorbet

This sophisticated coconut milk sorbet is made from just a few simple ingredients. It tastes just like a custard tart and is perfect either on its own or topped with Persian-inspired aromatics such as black tahini and pistachio.

Serves 6

Ingredients

1 x 400ml organic coconut milk
250ml (1 cup) coconut water
60ml pure maple syrup
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
pinch of nutmeg

Method

1. Combine coconut milk, coconut water, maple syrup, vanilla and nutmeg into a bowl.
2. Pour into an ice cream machine and churn according to manufacturer's instructions.
3. Freeze until required – though sorbet is best eaten on the same day it's made.

Notes and inspiration: Make a banana and coconut milkshake by blending a scoop of sorbet with one ripe lady finger banana, a spoonful of tahini and coconut water. Replace coconut water with fresh strawberry puree for a strawberry sorbet.

Recipes from Earth To Table by Teresa Cutter. For more delicious and easy recipes visit thehealthychef.com



Teresa Cutter

Founder of The Healthy Chef, Teresa is an author, nutritionist and classically trained chef. You can find more recipes, tips and products on her website, Healthy Recipes App, eBooks, Facebook and Instagram.



EARTH *to* TABLE

BY TERESA CUTTER

Plant-based
recipes for health
+ wellbeing



Earth To Table by Teresa Cutter
is available for purchase at thehealthychef.com



THE 5 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO

OWN YOUR NICHE

More than ever, you must stand out online if you want to claw back some of the losses that happened with the ‘COVID cuts’, writes digital marketer *Nicola Moras*.

As we all know, this year has been tough. From facilities being forcibly closed to opening up again under tight restrictions (only to be closed again in Victoria), 2020 has been a rollercoaster. Many fitness businesses have had to find ways to pivot online in order to continue bringing in revenue. One of the best things that you can do is to re-establish your niche and get super clear on who that is. The goal of niching is to know your audience so well that you can create marketing that is relatable to them. You want them to feel like you’ve been listening in on their conversations.

Businessman Robert Herjavec of the US version of *Shark Tank* has said of owning your niche ‘The narrower the niche, the more expertise you have to have.’ I could not agree more, especially in today’s market. The narrower it is, the more specific you can make it. This creates faster results. So, the big question is, how do you do that?

There are five simple steps you can take to own your narrow niche and get on track with building a great business.

Step 1. Identify your niche market’s problem

Successful marketers know that to own a niche, you have to know everything about the person you want as a client. The first thing you need to know about these people is what their problems are. What keeps them up at night? What stresses them out? What do they want that they are acutely aware of not having?

For instance, imagine your niche are overwhelmed, overworked and letting their health and wellbeing slide. You can create specific marketing sharing advice about how to overcome this. Every person has a desire to feel heard and to feel understood. This helps them see you care and establishes a great foundation to start a conversation.





Step 2. Establish what they want

Think about the ideal person or people you want to be your clients. What do they ultimately want from their life, and from the area of their life (fitness and wellbeing) that you can assist them with? Many people have goals around freedom and choice. They want to feel like they have clarity and a plan. They want to feel good in their own skin and they want to know that they can show up as the best version of themselves every day. Knowing these answers will give you the ability to create laser-focused content marketing.

Step 3. Unearth their secret goal, dream or desires

This is the supernova. When you know what people secretly want you can start to create marketing that specifically addresses this. For instance, their secret desire might be to be on *Ninja Warrior* or *Survivor*, but they don't tell anyone about it because they're embarrassed to voice such a big goal. Consequently, they do nothing about it. Determine what the secret goal, dream or desire is for your niche and start to show how your services can help them achieve it.

In this example, for instance, you might start sharing testimonials, pictures and even progress videos from clients you've trained for adventure challenges. By talking directly to your audience about the process you use with clients to help them achieve exactly the type of skills they themselves want to develop, you can give them the confidence to take the first step towards chasing their dream.

Step 4. Add value by giving away free information and education

Adding lots of free value works every time, in every niche. You know what the problems are that your audience have (Step 1), and now you can create a piece of free content that helps them start to solve that problem. You can do the same thing with Step 2, giving some suggestions, hints and tips on how to achieve their goal.

Do this without making an offer or selling something at the same time. Add value first. This shows generosity of spirit and that goes a long way to helping them see you as someone who cares. You'll stand out.

Step 5. Communicate with them like they're humans

Talk to people like you'd talk to your friends. Too many people take on a lecturing tone when they're posting online or in their blogs. It's important to remember that there is a human on the other end of your writing, videos and posts and they really need your help. If they comment on what you post, comment back! Have a conversation with them from a place of being generous.

Repeat these five steps and use them over and over again on a daily basis. This will not only have a huge impact on your creativity, it will also help your audience to see you as an expert at what you do.

“
The goal of niching is to know your audience so well that you can create marketing that is relatable to them.
”



Nicola Moras

*Nicola is an online visibility expert and author of *Into The Spotlight*, a guide to help you step up your online visibility, become a Rockstar in your industry and make your business thrive.*

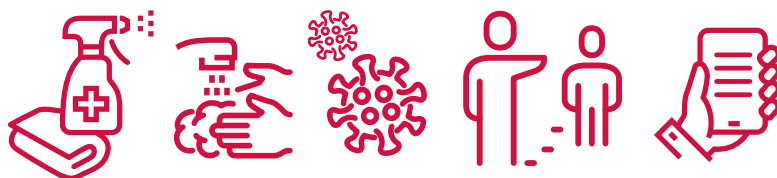


Where's your next Group Training superstar going to come from?

BASEGX



Supporting the Exercise Industry in New Zealand



ExerciseNZ is supporting the industry by making its COVID-19 resource pages FREE to everyone. These resources are designed to support those who operate a business (either a facility or as an individual) that provides exercise options to the New Zealand public on how to do so safely within a COVID-19 environment.

Support on implementing the advice and the ability to ask questions directly to ExerciseNZ is a member benefit.

For membership information visit www.exercisenz.org.nz/join or email Nikki@exercisenz.org.nz for personal assistance

REPs

The recognised quality mark for exercise professionals and facilities. REPs is an independent, powerful and promotable quality mark, which includes crucial insurance cover for contractors, and portability to overseas registers.



www.reps.org.nz

ExerciseNZ

We support exercise businesses of all types and sizes including Yoga studios, independent trainers as well as small and large exercise facilities, with membership options. We provide: advocacy, business support, resources and guidelines, events and upskilling, industry standards.



www.exercisenz.org.nz

PT Council

Connecting personal trainers by promoting events, and sharing resources that further educate trainers and help empower their businesses and careers.



www.ptcouncil.co.nz



NZ NEWS



News and views from the New Zealand fitness industry.

Keeping Kiwis safe and gyms open are two sides of the same



Going back only a few weeks, the industry was breathing a collective sigh of relief in New Zealand. As restrictions eased to COVID-19 Level

1, businesses were reporting generally positive results in terms of visits, revenue and, perhaps most importantly, new membership sales – all of which were at around 80-90% of pre-COVID levels.

But all that changed overnight. In early August, New Zealand reported its first cases of community transmission for over 100 days, growing to over 120 new cases since then. As a result, not only have government restrictions increased around New Zealand, but we are back to 24 hours being a long time. 'Planning' now often refers to timeframes of days or weeks rather than months or years, and the future is far from clear.

One thing we have focused on throughout the pandemic is providing as much certainty as possible for the industry – be it through our Framework (which now covers Levels 1 to 3) or through advice and support on business challenges. Since May 2020, we have also been working on a number of scenarios (including going back into Level 3) and their ramifications for both our industry and New Zealand's exercising public.

Staying active, staying open and staying safe

Front and centre of all of our work has been the need to ensure that whatever we advocate for is safe. We use the latest evidence-based research, while also working within government rules and messaging. At the same time, we are very aware that the latest outbreak in Auckland highlighted how

fragile the CV-19 Levels are, and can change at any time. However, having rules that keep everyone safe, but put gyms and trainers out of business isn't sustainable for either our industry, or the New Zealand public. Over three quarters of a million Kiwis regularly use gyms, studios and exercise facilities in some shape or form, so we want to support them in staying active, and using facilities and trainers safely.

So, in addition to keeping Kiwis safe, we've been working on ways to keep exercise businesses of all types and sizes open as much as possible. We were fortunately successful the first time around in removing gyms from the 'gyms and bars' narrative. It may have been forgotten that gyms were among the first businesses to re-open under the staged level 2 re-opening, when many were predicting we would be last.

Our challenge now is very much around Level 3. We have developed a number of protocols that allow exercise businesses to operate, albeit in a very limited fashion, by keeping exercisers safe. This is the key – safe and open. So far, the Government's response has been at best lukewarm, but we continue to advocate for this. We want Kiwis to stay active, exercise facilities to stay open, and everyone to stay safe.

Do your bit to show we can self-regulate

For us to be able to convince government that our industry can operate safely at Level 3, we first need to show them that we can do it at Level 2. It's important, therefore, that all trainers and facilities follow the existing framework, especially around physical distancing and mask use. Without this, it makes it very difficult for us to convince the relevant government agencies that we can self-regulate and keep the exercising public safe.



Adhering strictly to Level 2 rules will enable us to have the hard conversations with government and confidently advocate on behalf of the collective industry. This will allow us to find common ground between protocols that we know are safe and those that government find acceptable. This, in turn, will enable trainers, studios, and exercise facilities of all sizes and types to continue to operate at Level 3 in some reduced capacity.

As always, reach out to us if you need help, have questions or are simply feeling overwhelmed. We may not have all the answers, but we are here for our members, of ExerciseNZ, the New Zealand Register of Exercise Professionals and Yoga New Zealand.

Richard Beddie
CEO, ExerciseNZ
info@exercisenz.org.nz

NETWORK CATALOGUE

Online Continuing Education

Network scours the globe for experts in all fields of health and fitness to create the widest range of quality online CECs/CPDs.

Packed with intel to fuel your interests, business and career. Network brings you the widest range of quality CECs/CPDs online, so wherever you are and whatever you want to do, you can be the best you can be.

Whether you need 1 quick CEC, or want to upskill with an in-depth multi-CEC specialisation, you'll find it here.

Click each course below for full details and [CLICK HERE](#) to see Network's full range of courses.



3 CECs
CPDs | **\$149**

FUNDAMENTALS OF MOBILITY **NEW**

Learn how to deliver the most effective warm ups to prepare your clients for functional training. Exercises include basic joint rolling, self-myofascial release with foam rollers and tennis balls, joint mobilisations, muscle activations and static stretching. This preparation makes functional training safer and more accessible to previously injured or deconditioned clients.

[MORE INFO](#)



8 CECs
CPDs | **\$289**

FUNDAMENTALS OF KETTLEBELL – LEVEL 1&2 BUNDLE **NEW**

The versatility and functionality of kettlebells have made them a staple training tool for today's PT. The Level 1 module introduces this versatile tool and teaches how to incorporate the fundamental kettlebell movements into programs. The Level 2 module builds on these foundations, with advanced double kettlebell exercises and theory. Completing this course bundle will establish you as a kettlebell expert.

[MORE INFO](#)



6 CECs
CPDs | **\$289**

FUNDAMENTALS OF SUSPENDED FITNESS – LEVEL 1&2 BUNDLE **NEW**

Discover suspended fitness concepts and learn how to assess and adjust essential and advanced suspension exercises in order to safely train individuals of all levels. Level 2 delves deeper, exploring planes of motion, closed kinetic chain, myofascial lines, shoulder joint mechanics and uncontrolled lumbar extension. Learn the underlying principles of key exercise techniques and become an advanced suspended fitness training expert.

[MORE INFO](#)

Note: All prices shown are Network Member rates and include GST. Non-member rates are available.

[CLICK HERE TO SEE THE FULL RANGE](#)

Find all these courses, plus loads more on everything from Corrective Exercise and Group Training, to Nutrition and PT Business – and remember to check your Member Portal for your FREE quarterly CEC courses!

Power Music

Power Music is Australian Fitness Network's EXCLUSIVE provider of PPCA-free music. As a Network Member, you receive 10% off all purchases, including custom playlists, individual tracks, CDs, choreography videos and more.

Power Music also features ClickMix, which enables you to create your very own custom mix at whatever BPM you like and perfectly 32-count phrased. This allows you to truly use the music of your choice for your classes.

Click each album below for full playlist and preview listen, and [CLICK HERE](#) to check out the full range of Power Music – remembering to use the code **network2020** to save 10% at checkout!

Power Music (PPCA-free)



SILVER SENIORS VOL. 17



TOP 40 VOL. 77



SUMMERTIME SUMMERTIME!
VOL. 4



SONGS OF SUMMER 2020



STRENGTH NOW | SEPTEMBER
2020



TABATA NOW | SEPTEMBER
2020



SENIORS NOW | SEPTEMBER
2020



PILATES NOW | SEPTEMBER
2020



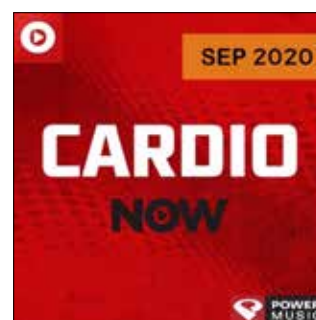
KICKBOX NOW | SEPTEMBER
2020



HIIT NOW | SEPTEMBER 2020



CYCLE NOW | SEPTEMBER 2020



CARDIO NOW | SEPTEMBER
2020



WANT UNLIMITED MUSIC, ANYTIME, ANYWHERE?

All of these PPCA-free music releases, and over 10,000 more tracks, are available on POWER MUSIC NOW, the premium digital music subscription service. Network Members can subscribe for the special rate of \$19.95 per month. Start your FREE 30-day trial today!

[CLICK HERE TO SEE THE FULL RANGE](#)

Check out the full range of Power Music as well as the awesome auto-DJ functionality of ClickMix – and remember to enter the code **network2020** at checkout to SAVE 10%



Why PTontheNet is essential for your PT business:

Unlimited CECs for as little as \$3.99 a piece

Largest exercise library in the world with over 6,000 exercises

Simple workout builder with workout sharing tools



Access to PTontheNet can be obtained
in one of two ways:

1. PTontheNet access combined
with full benefits of Network
membership for the value
of \$199 per annum

OR

2. Full access to PTontheNet
for \$119 per annum



For more information
or to sign up, visit
fitnessnetwork.com.au/pton
OR
Call 1300-493-832