

# ★ MERLIN FITNESS ★

PUTTING THE MAGIC INTO YOUR WORKOUTS

Welcome to the first issue of the much anticipated Merlin Fitness Newsletter. It's going to be my way of sharing with you some of my thoughts on the world of health and fitness, and hopefully inspiring you to get active and healthy along the way. As a fitness professional I get lots of e-mails from fellow personal trainers and equipment companies discussing the latest innovations, trends and scientific research. Most quickly get deleted because they don't tell me anything new which I can use to change my clients lives. However, a few weeks ago I received an e-mail which really stood out, and I have re-written it to share with you its powerful analogy.

Most of us have been in a new car and can remember how clean (and funny smelling!) it was and how smooth the engine and gearbox felt when it was driven. We all understand that to keep that car looking and driving like it did the day it rolled off the production line, it will have to be well maintained, run on high quality fuel and serviced regularly. You might think that to keep that car in optimum condition, the best thing would be to never drive it very far, or travel above a minimum speed or distance. However, you can't leave it standing idle for weeks at a time and then expect everything to be just the same as when you left it; the battery will be flat, the oil will have settled in the engine and corrosion will have started. Not only that but regular use will alert you to any developing problems and allow you take care of them before they escalate.

You can save money by putting lower quality oil in the engine and low octane fuel in the tank, but over a period of time the car will run less well and not perform at its best. That low quality fuel and dirty oil will make the car run badly, block up the filters and pipes, and ultimately lead to the engine stopping all together. You can decide not to service the car, clean or maintain it, and at first it won't affect things very much. However, over time its value will fall, it won't look as good or run as well, and ultimately it will break down. What can you do then? Take it to a garage who will charge you lots of money to replace some parts with after-market substitutes which are unlikely to be as good as those it was originally designed with. They will perform their function, but often it's only a matter of time before something else goes wrong.

Do you see where I am heading here? Let's flip this around, and compare that car to the human body. We are generally advised to drive a new car more slowly for the first few hundred miles until the engine and gearbox have settled in. This is rather like a baby or toddler learning fundamental movement patterns which it will use for the rest of its life. The car goes through a period of full functionality when everything is smooth and easy, and pretty much no matter what we do it will start and take us from point A to B problem free (remember being a teenager or in your 20's?).

As the car gets older it will probably develop little 'niggles' which might make it less of a pleasure to drive. The same is said of the human body, where aging is a natural process which has the potential to make movement and exercise more difficult. But rather like regular car maintenance, regular body maintenance (exercise, good diet, regular sleep patterns and reduced stress) have the ability to slow that decline as much as possible. It is much harder, although not impossible, to repair the situation if we have allowed things to slide a long way.

To perform well we don't just need movement, but regular, high quality nutrition – remember the statement 'we are what we eat'. Regularly feed the body with too much low quality food and the likely outcome will be obesity, high cholesterol, heart disease, type 2 diabetes and any number of other health conditions which can vastly impact quality (and quantity) of life. If you don't look after your body, it can't look after you. Is it not better to try to avoid lifestyle related long-term health problems, rather than try to treat the symptoms later with medication or worse still surgery? Realistically this is the only body we will get and it has to last from the moment we are conceived to the second we die.

You may think that I am biased, but in my opinion the best thing we can do to keep our body functioning at a near optimal level is exercise. It's better than any drugs, surgery or crazy diets at keeping us looking and feeling young. Is it not ironic that most people know what they need to do to look after their car and are happy to make that investment, but don't treat the ultimate machine, their own body, with the same respect?

### **NORDIC WALKING**

The weather is improving and my Nordic Walking classes are starting to grow in popularity. Special congratulations are due to those dedicated clients who started walking with me over the winter and stuck it out through some less than ideal weather – hopefully you are now reaping the rewards for that commitment.

I am currently holding two Nordic Walking classes each week, generally on Thursday morning and Saturday afternoon. I am keen to put on more classes if there is sufficient demand, so if you would like a class on a particular day or time then please let me know – how about a weekday evening now we have plenty of daylight?



If you have never tried Nordic Walking and would like to give it a go, why not come to a taster session and experience one of the fastest growing fitness activities in the world? I will be holding a series of free of charge taster sessions during June so if you or any family members would like to try walking with poles, just let me know. The next free taster will be this coming Sunday (June 13<sup>th</sup>) at 10:30am at Salt Mill Park, Saltash (please contact me for further details).

If you are an existing Merlin Nordic client, do you have any friends or family members who you think would enjoy Nordic Walking? For every person you refer who goes on to complete my improver workshop, you will get a free group session. Full details and a class schedule can be found on our website [www.merlinfitness.com](http://www.merlinfitness.com)

## **PERSONAL TRAINING**

It's not too late to work on getting that 'bikini body' in preparation for the summer. Why not sign up for a series of one-on-one or small group sessions to kick start your routine into high gear? There are many advantages to having your own personal trainer, and it can be one of the best ways to ensure that you stay motivated, have fun and get the results which you desire. I will work with you to formulate a realistic plan which you can stick to, and will provide you with all of the help and advice you need to reach your weight loss or fitness goals.

Personal training need not be as expensive as you think. If you want to reduce the cost why not see if you can recruit some friends (up to 4 people) to share some small group sessions? My workouts incorporate a lot of functional movements (used in every day activities) and exciting equipment (TRX, ViPR, BodyBlade, Kettlebell) to give you fun, fresh workouts and guaranteed results. Please e-mail me at [beth@merlinfitness.com](mailto:beth@merlinfitness.com) or call for further details.

## **KRANKCYCLE**

Now for some really exciting news. I have just become the proud owner of a pair of Krankcycles – the revolutionary new piece of upper body fitness equipment from Johnny G (the inventor of the Spinning® programme) and Matrix Fitness. When I first tried the Krankcycle at a fitness conference in Florida last November, I wasn't sure what to expect. Not only did I meet some inspirational people, but found the Krankcycle to be incredibly fun, a real challenge for the often underutilised upper body, and most of all a great cardiovascular and strength endurance workout.

The Krankcycle is set to take the fitness world by storm, and there is a growing list of instructors and studios offering this innovative class all over the world. The Krankcycle is aimed at not only regular gym goers, but also the most disenfranchised in the fitness world – those with disabilities, in wheelchairs, with lower limb injuries, orthopaedic issues, poor balance, overweight, and anyone who find weight bearing exercise difficult. It is also a great cross training and upper body strength activity for runners, cyclists and triathletes who are looking for an addition to their predominantly lower limb exercise.



To understand a bit more about the Krankcycle, see this inspirational youtube video.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KN-kxjJ6N6I&playnext\\_from=TL&videos=J7TCq5b0-el](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KN-kxjJ6N6I&playnext_from=TL&videos=J7TCq5b0-el)

This month I will be running special introductory sessions on the Krankcycle for just £6, so why not give me a call or e-mail to set up a time? Better still, come along with a friend and have a fabulous workout together!

#### **Q&A**

Do you have a question about health or fitness? If so why not pop in an e-mail to [beth@merlinfitness.com](mailto:beth@merlinfitness.com) and I will do my best to answer it. Look out for the Q&A (anonymous of course) section in upcoming newsletters.

Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to your friends and family. If you would like to subscribe please do so via the link on my website [www.merlinfitness.com](http://www.merlinfitness.com)

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