



Trans4ming you

Words AURORA REES Photos WILLIAM DAVENPORT

Functional fitness is within reach

With the holiday season having come and gone, there's a good chance you might be feeling the post-holiday bulge! If you're anything like me, you probably overindulged on Christmas cake, boozy BBQs and naughty summer goodies and find yourself wondering why your clothes have been a tad snug lately (hint – they didn't shrink in the wash).

You're about three months into a post-New Year's resolution gym membership that's only been used about four times. You've come up with every excuse in the book not to go. You want to get fit – you know you need to do something, but the thought of getting up early to drive to the gym, find a park and walk through the inclement weather only to be greeted by ear-bashing techno and a queue for a machine you don't even know how to use properly anyway is the ultimate motivation killer. Perhaps the gym just isn't quite your scene... sound familiar?

If that's the case, there's no need to give up the ghost and retire to the sofa for Johnny Depp DVDs and a bag of Biguns – get yourself a mobile personal trainer and bring the gym to you. This way, both you and Mr Depp can enjoy the best of both worlds right in your very own lounge.

Rachel Marks, director of Fitness Trans4mations Mobile Personal Training and Lifestyle Solutions helps us understand the benefits of a managed fitness programme, without having to leave the comfort of your home, office or hotel. Essentially, they bring the workout to you.

There are many reasons people work with a personal trainer. Perhaps they're not seeing the results they expected from their workouts. Maybe they need to be challenged, want instruction, have a physical injury/condition to consider, are training for a specific goal, have young children at home, are too busy to leave the office or are just plain bored with the same old routine



of migrating from one stationary machine to the next without a results-targeted focus.

"Actually, a lot of equipment in a gym can be bad," Rachel explains. "Imagine someone who spends the whole day seated in their office, and they go to the gym, which is full of machines. So what do they do? They sit on the leg press. But they do it sitting down. How is that going to help their legs if they aren't standing up?"

This is what Rachel describes as 'non-functional exercise' – meaning a workout not necessarily



relevant to everyday activities. "A lot of people get bad backs because they spend all their time sitting down and then go to the gym and spend even more time sitting down." The workout then becomes less effective or sometimes even redundant.

Fitness Trans4mations focus on a holistic approach to fitness, with most packages including nutritional advice and support, directed towards a whole attitude makeover.

Programmes begin with a free consultation with one of Rachel's professional team of highly qualified trainers. Here, client and trainer are able to discuss the client's exercise history, their personal training preferences, any medical conditions or injuries, dietary and day-to-day lifestyle habits and what their measurable goals are. An exercise programme is then selected according to each individual's needs and can be tweaked accordingly to suit their own schedules and lifestyle demands. "The aim is to help people realise long-term, sustainable goals with an ethical approach to achievement," maintains Rachel. "We want to train people to train themselves."

In order to stay varied and interesting, each session is different from the last, but all utilise a core set of uncomplicated, mobile equipment. Steps, dumbbells, Swiss balls, skipping ropes, resistance/toning bands, balance discs, boxing gloves and focus pads are all easily transported to the client's location and incorporated into standard workout sessions. These pieces are versatile enough to give the body a balanced workout yet compact and lightweight enough to be brought into homes or offices. In addition to regular workouts with their trainer, new clients can access Fitness Trans4mation's home fitness kits so that they can have their own equipment to use at home and achieve maximum results from their training.

Another focus at Fitness Trans4mations is corporate wellbeing. Rachel's team enter workplaces and design tailored programmes to improve staff health and energy levels. This enhances employee productivity, motivation, team cohesion and adds a bit of positive 'pep' to the office. A motivational workout during a conference or seminar can also be a fun way to keep attendees focused and revitalised... not to mention awake!

Despite her super fit (and did I mention perky?) appearance, Rachel insists that she was not one of those people "born with a dumb-bell in their hand". Having little interest in fitness or sports for many years, she had a change of heart after a prolonged travel-related illness.

"I realised that your health is the most important



Rachel Marks, centre, with trainers Murray McMichael and Nicola Spiers



thing," she quips. She joined a gym but didn't have the tools with which to maximise her workout to gain optimum results. So she began a programme with a personal trainer and really enjoyed it. So much so, that she was inspired to give up her career with an airline, deciding instead to help others as a personal trainer. She now trains six times a week, and while she still might not be the biggest fan of actual sports, she keeps up her cardio and loves weight training. She also maintains a healthy eating plan and understands the healing benefits of being in top shape both physically and mentally – a philosophy she brings in to her work.

Like all the trainers at Fitness Trans4mations, Rachel is a member of the Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs). She is highly regarded in her profession with longstanding regular clients. As she is quite sought after in her field, customers can opt to train with Rachel at a slightly higher rate or she can assign them

"We want to train people to train themselves"

to one of the expert trainers in her team.

Rachel initially began her fitness career working in a gym but realised there was a growing demand for good personal trainers. She decided mobile fitness was more convenient and advantageous for her clients, rather than a hectic, sterile gym experience.

"I became dissatisfied with gyms very quickly. To me they were really impersonal. Clients are paying good money for your time, but you are often interrupted because there are no gym instructors on the floor. When I'm with a client, I need to be 100% with a client." Gyms, she explains, come with distractions and are sometimes too busy and noisy for productive one-on-one training sessions.

Fitness Trans4mations has no memberships or binding contracts. Clients can train as often or as little as they like, individually or in groups. Sessions can be arranged on a schedule or on a casual basis in any home, office or even hotel room.

The team are happy to travel anywhere within the Wellington region. They will help you set and achieve your fitness goals without the hassle of belonging to a gym. Their brand of fitness is about being functional and convenient. Most importantly though, they'll help you to discover the secret to motivation. "The only person who can really motivate you," adds Rachel, "is yourself. But we're here to help."

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