



How Have You Experienced Inclusive Fitness So Far? Here's 3 Facts You Should Consider...

Fact 1 Most of us at some time or other will experience a traumatic event or a sudden change in life. Whether this is a personal event, illness, injury or even a medical condition or ongoing stress, your world as you know it today can change in an instant. Have you ever thought what you would do? How would your life change?



Fact 2 Did you know 1 in 5 people have disability? You might be one of them, or know someone that is. Disability can be many things including hidden disability like diabetes, a physical condition, mental health, trauma or accident related. Truth is, most of us, (even you as you read this?) hope the NHS and care services will look after us when it's needed. Can you really depend on one thing to help your recovery?

Fact 3 If you've ever waited for help, maybe your car broke down, it can feel like forever can't it! What if that wait is your health, wellbeing or your family? Wouldn't you want to help yourself if you could? Often the smallest things have the biggest effect. One of the simplest and most effective self-help activities can be keeping a journal. Surprised? Read on...



Let's Get You Thinking

If everyone could exercise, the world would be a better place. Maybe this sounds dramatic ?, and difficult for you to see so many people joining in with exercise. It doesn't have to be exercise as you may know it. This short guide will help you get started on your inclusive fitness journey today.

The thing is with exercise that everyone can do it.

Whatever your age, weight, ability, space or experience. The important thing is that you are able to start when you are ready. Exercise in many forms, including yoga, running and even Olympics , has been practised for 100's of years by 1000's of people all over the world. Exercise has many benefits including physical, social and mental wellbeing helping to improve the mind, body and soul.

If, and when, it's possible for everyone to join in exercise they enjoy and feel at ease with, then there should be more people who can benefit from a more enriched life in many ways and live a more fulfilling life they have always wanted. A life that can be shared with others, and is welcomed in open discussion amongst friends without competition.

Exercise and movement will contribute to a wider range of skills and self-awareness that will help in your life. It may be helpful to start a diary or keep track of your journey and how you are benefitting , here's a great journal that will see you through a whole year and check in with you and also ask how you are. [Get your diary companion on Amazon here.](#)



What You Can Expect To Benefit From - Especially If You Are New To Exercise.

Exercise can be a great tonic for anyone. Combining movement, new people, laughter, socialising and improving your whole wellbeing and a new outlook on life.

There are many benefits , so here's a summary for you:

- **Feel Good Factor.** Endorphines can increase during and after exercise.
- **Reduces Stress.** Exercise can help clear the mind and help reduce stress.
- **Your Time , Your Place.** Exercise can be anywhere, and a time frame that works for you.
- **Money Saving.** Exercise can help reduce habits like smoking, medication and alcohol.
- **Healthy Changes.** Small changes will start in your mental and physical wellbeing

Find New Classes Or Groups To Try

You might find different instructors tell you to do things in different ways. This doesn't mean in any way you're doing anything wrong!! The simple fact here is that each instructor is an individual and will have a slightly different way in teaching or use of phrases while speaking. You should find an instructor with a teaching style that also works for you. If you don't like military style, or being shouted at, find a great instructor who is a little calmer and their class style is different too.



Just Try It! (You Might Like It)

The most important thing (and often the hardest?) is to actually turn up! I know this sounds simple, if you are venturing out on your own it can be daunting. Most of us don't like to be outside our 'comfort zone'...however, this is where we learn new things, meet new people and can challenge ourselves to grow mentally and physically.

Don't beat yourself up if you don't manage everything the first time you try.

Remember, you couldn't ride a bike the first time you got on one either ??

Regular amounts of effort, however small it may seem, is always better than nothing. Effort is most important. As long as you try, genuinely try, you will gain many benefits as we have already mentioned earlier including physical and mental wellbeing.

Everything of value takes time. If you would like to try some exercise at home for FREE, use this link for a free 30 minute inclusive workout for all abilities. <https://function-fitness-with-wendy-h.teachable.com/> You can try these exercises at home, at your own pace, and start with just a few minutes to build yourself up towards the 30 minutes.



Got Your Gym Kit Sorted Yet?

As long as you are comfortable in your clothing and they don't restrict circulation or breathing, you are good to go! It's NOT expected that you rush out and spend a small fortune on branded clothing to look like you're fresh off the high street and ready for your Instagram shots!

Let's be honest, most gyms will ask you to wear 'suitable clothing and footwear' and that is for health and safety interests for you to get the best use of their facilities, and for you to be safe. If you turn up in high heels, a huge outdoor coat, maybe a dress, or steeped in jewellery then chances are someone will speak to you. Well, you'd like to think someone would notice wouldn't you? ...if they don't, maybe it's not the right place for you. Remember it's for your safety and theirs so you can work together.

HOWEVER !! If you NEED to wear supportive or adaptive footwear or clothing for your health and safe mobility, PLEASE tell the instructor!! Don't put yourself at risk trying to meet 'dress code'!! (sadly, i've seen this many times, and frankly it's not safe or helpful if you're trying to 'fit in' because of a sign you've seen or unable to attend due to inability to conform to ill-fitting footwear for you!)

Moving Things Up

You will feel the benefits of exercise and new challenges fairly quickly in your everyday activities like climbing stairs and sleeping better. Always work at your own pace, don't worry about keeping up with anyone else. It can lead to injury, over tiredness and ill-health trying to do too much too soon. Take your time, and enjoy whatever your chosen activity is. Push yourself a little bit now and then to feel the real benefits, but always listen to your body while you are working and resting. Pain is our body's way of making us pay attention to ourselves. Pain can be there to help guide you and maybe tell you something is not right. If in doubt, speak with someone either a friend, GP or fitness professional.



Stay Safe

If you need to take a break, then take a break. For you to rest is as important as exercise. You'll grow best if you workout at your own pace, not at someone else's. If you have any health concerns you should consult your GP. If it's advice or motivation for exercise, there is lots of information that can be found on the internet, library and importantly with your gym and fitness instructor. You can find free information

Last Words About This Guide.... This short guide is a perfect start to help you understand a little more about exercise and some of the benefits for you, others and where it might lead. You may already have some experience with exercise either present or past, hopefully times have changed if you have poor memories previously. Don't Give up, try things again. There are lots of different types of exercise you can try including outdoor walking events and walking netball. If you're looking for inclusive inspiration, make a visit to www.functionfitness.uk and see what's been happening in a great mixed inclusive fitness weekly class.

Any Questions?

Any questions or ideas about exercise, inclusive fitness or wellbeing I'd really like to hear from you. *Get in touch by email wendy.h@functionfitness.uk. Good luck with your journey, and I hope to hear from you soon. In the meantime.....*



Use This Checklist To Help You Progress.

- Build A Sequence To Suit You. For your individual needs. If that happens to be once a week, don't let others tell you 'it's not enough', it's realistic for you and that's what matters.
- Find Your Go-to People. This may be others you have met in similar circumstances to you, similar age or have things in common with. Spend time with positive people who motivate and listen to you.
- Start At The End. Sounds weird, right? If you have a goal to work to, you will keep to it. And when you reach that goal, whatever it may be for you, whether that's walking more, losing weight or simply getting out of the house, make it a positive milestone along your journey.
- Remember To Breathe! When you are joining in with any activity, if you have any difficulty breathing, you should stop. Exercise SHOULD make you breathe a little bit harder as your lungs will need more oxygen to help your heart and blood meet demands of exercise, but breathing shouldn't be difficult.
- Is This Working For You?! Whatever you have decided to join in with or share, make sure it's right for you and that you enjoy it. Chances are if you enjoy what you are doing, you are more likely to stick at it. This applies best when you are with others who you connect with, can socialise with and have community with. If this is not the case, try something different or even go somewhere different.