**Overcoming ‘Gym Anxiety’:**

The gym can be a scary place for the majority of people. Even before stepping into the gym... your heart starts to race, that feeling of panic starts to sink in and you would rather turn round and run in the opposite direction than step on that cross-trainer. Trust me... I have been there. Only last year, with joining a new gym, I was left feeling that ‘gym anxiety’. Even after training for 4 years as well as training to be a Personal Trainer, I felt it. Sounds a bit sceptical, I know. However, stepping into that new environment can be daunting for anyone, especially if you are braving it on your own!

So! I want to show you the ways I dealt with my own ‘gym anxiety’ and how you can help yourself overcome it and start smashing those fitness goals, so take notes.

I go to the gym a lot. I try to train at least 3 – 5 times a week and 99% of the time it involves picking up some sort of weight etc. dumbbell/barbell/kettlebell. I have always weight trained. I love it! If I didn’t I would not do it. This is probably something that helped me in overcoming my ‘gym anxiety’. I have tried quite a few variants when it comes to exercise, and cardio-based ones (personally for me!) just did not suit. I felt that I struggled more going to the gym if I had something in my plan that I knew I wasn’t going to enjoy as much. So the best thing for me, was finding something I loved, to make me go to the gym.

Wanting to do weights as well came with its barriers. Gyms and health clubs can become very intimidating places, with the idea that gyms are full of massive bodybuilders, toned cross-fitters and scary looking machines. So lack of familiarity can been seen as an issue. My advice is… do not be afraid to step out of your comfort zone and ask for help. It is ok to not know anything to begin with! All the members of staff at any gym should be happy to help you! It’s their job!!

Another note to discuss is the idea of people avoiding the gym because they are too ‘unfit’. This to me sounds ridiculous. The whole purpose of the gym is to build on your fitness! You are not going to walk in and start running a marathon on the treadmill or begin with squatting massive amounts. Going to the gym is all about being individualised to you and progressing at a pace that suits what you want, so do not focus on what everyone is doing around you. Maybe try starting a plan and keeping a track of what you are doing! This allows you to keep focused!

A final point is looking for a gym ‘buddy’ to help push you through those gym doors! New experiences are always easier when you do them with a friend! You can do classes together, or even do a group PT together. Another option is to also book some sessions with a PT so they work alongside you to boost that confidence! Like myself, after a couple of sessions your confidence will soon start to climb up!

So, if you feel like you have ‘gym anxiety’ don’t be afraid to ask for help, you are not alone! Exercise should not be missed out on! It is too important and we all have to start somewhere. So get on your gym gear, collect that gym membership and start your fitness journey now! Together we have got this!

Time is also a biggie when it comes to overcoming the fear of the gym. From my personal experience, you still get the odd niggles that can bother you. E.g., people staring, feeling like you are doing something wrong. Nevertheless, it does get better with time. When I train, I just put my headphones on, switch off and only focus on what I am doing. Most of the time anyways, this is what the majority of the other people in the gym do. However, if you do catch the odd person staring at you whilst working out, it may be because they are intrigued at what exercise you are doing. I am guilty of this myself. There has been so many times where I’ve caught someone doing a new exercise and thought ‘ooh I should try that one next time’. So do not overthink! You are doing great!

For any more information on overcoming ‘gym anxiety’ or enquiring about Personal Training Sessions, please contact Georgia French on either 07527417336 or emailing g,fitnesspt@outlook.com.