



IS IT TIME TO DETOX YOUR EXERCISE ROUTINE?

How healthy is your relationship with physical activity? Is it like marmite? Do you love it? Hate it? Something in between?

Do you:

- 1 **THINK** of exercise as a way to lose weight?
- 2 **EXERCISE** to eat or eat to exercise?
- 3 **IGNORE** pain when you're working out or see it as a sign of weakness?
- 4 **ONLY** count workouts if you're training at max heart rate?
- 5 **ALWAYS** compare yourself to others?
- 6 **FEEL** guilty for not achieving your workout schedule?
- 7 **AVOID** rest days?

We know that exercise is good for mind and body – it boosts your mood and confidence, can provide a way to spend time with friends, relieves stress by releasing endorphins and keeps you energised during the day - but an unhealthy gym routine can be harmful to your mental health.

That's why it's important to check in on your habits and watch out for signs that they've become more harmful than helpful.





HERE ARE 5 SIGNS TO LOOK OUT FOR...



YOU SEE YOUR FLAWS, NOT YOUR PROGRESS

Even though it can be tough and challenging, starting out on a journey to physical health tends to produce faster results in the beginning – and you expect that pace of progress to continue! But then you hit a plateau as your body adapts and shows fewer changes in the mirror or on the scale.

At this point, many of us keep pushing and pushing and pushing, sometimes to pain and injury. ***Try taking a break, celebrating what you have achieved so far, then re-evaluating your goals and action plan.***



YOU EXERCISE TO EAT

If you calculate the exact number of calories you need to burn just so you can have a pint and a packet of crisps or chocolate Hobnob or a slice of crusty bread and butter; then exercise can turn into a punishment rather than something that brings you joy.

It's okay to have weight loss goals, they just need to be realistic and achievable for your body. Remember that food is important, and it's not something you have to make up for. ***Focus on physical activity (and food) that nurtures your body and your mental health, what kind of exercise makes you smile, and feel great afterwards?***



YOU NEVER TAKE BREAKS

One sign that your relationship with exercise is in trouble is if you overtrain or push yourself too far, even during illness or injuries. Overtraining is common among gymgoers who push themselves through a string of high-intensity workouts without adequate rest and recovery time.

Recovery days allow your body to repair muscle tissue and rebuild glycogen levels, so you can get the most out of your workouts. ***Could your rest days include gentle stretching, yoga or a gentle stroll outside?***





YOU WANT RESULTS AND YOU WANT THEM NOW!

Understanding your 'why' is the secret to achieving success in anything you do. Starting an exercise programme for the wrong reasons and not aligning it to your long-term goals is a great way to set yourself up for failure. You are not the weight on the scale or the pace you can run a 5km or the weight you can bench – those are just numbers.

While numbers are useful metrics for tracking progress, how you feel and having the right energy to power you through the day might just be more important. **Reflect on your goals using the GROW or SMART models.**

Grow - what do you want?

Reality - what is happening now?

Opportunity - what else could you do?

Will - what will you do?

Specific

Measurable

Achievable

Realistic

Timely



YOU ALWAYS COMPARE YOURSELF TO OTHERS

There is nothing wrong with having role models or people that inspire you, but comparing yourself to others is a form of judgement (of self or others) that can lead to disappointment (or arrogance, if you think you're better than others).

You are truly unique, unless you have an identical twin, so your genetics and how your body works and responds to exercise is not the same as anyone else. The same weight doesn't look the same in two people either. **Focus on you, stay in your lane, find what works for you and celebrate all the amazing things you can do!**

