

DRAWING A LINE FROM YOUR WELLBEING TO YOUR BOTTOM LINE

There's a lot to be said for the state of your own health and its impact on the health of your bottom line. Flic Manning explains.

Being a fitness professional is a responsibility. It is an honour and privilege to be a part of a client's journey. What you offer is not just the skill to pick up a weight correctly or help someone run a faster sprint. You're often someone's gateway into learning about the power they have inside as a human being.

They may come to you at 15 or 60 years of age, with very little knowledge about how the human body or mind works; and more importantly, how THEIR mind and body works. They look to you as an authority and mentor, which means that what you do and say counts. They will watch you during training sessions or classes, and also when you do your own workouts at the gym, on social media and more. So, it doesn't bode well when fitness professionals have one of the highest burnout and turnover rates in any industry!

This speaks volumes as to why so many people would get gym memberships and then stop using them in less than 12 months. It also alludes to why so many fitness businesses fail to thrive. None of these things are separate; they are all connected.

In my work, I spend a lot of time connecting dots, solving puzzles and helping people find a way to get sustainable success. Whether in health, finances, business or relationships. I have become attuned to spotting patterns of thinking and behaviours that are no longer working for the individual.

The trap I've seen many fitness professionals fall into is the focus on KPIs and goal-setting to the exclusion of "human needs". These needs are not "sometimes" needs, they are "every-single-day-of-your-life" needs.

It's counterproductive, for example, to focus so heavily on client numbers that you forget to eat a proper meal or enjoy adequate sleep. If you work aggressively to increase the number of client sessions from 15 to 25 in a week, but as a result you're propping yourself up with coffee and power bars to do it, your body and mind will begin to run out of resources.

As your inner resources run low, a number of things may occur:

- Firstly, you increase the likelihood of getting sick. Your immune system will buckle as you ignore its warning signs. Unwittingly, you may make your clients sick as a result (not the best way to encourage health).
- You will tend to make more mistakes, and this can result in injuries or, at the least, you may come off as unprofessional or uncaring (people's lives are in your hands and not all of them have the health to bounce back quickly – especially those with chronic or invisible health conditions).
- You may inadvertently teach your clients to set unrealistic expectations for themselves by watching you do it to yourself. Initially this may motivate them, but eventually it will burn them out just as it will you.

So, while your client numbers may rise, there may be a later fall – perhaps seemingly out of the blue – once they decide they cannot meet the example you set. The resulting conclusion may be that exercise and health is not for them!

With unstable client numbers, the stress in your life increases, which may cause a negative attitude to creep into your sessions (resulting in more clients dropping off).

You're then offering free sessions to get more clients, but the cycle continues until you get so frustrated, burned out, sick, injured or disappointed that you question if a career in fitness is the right one for you.

If any of this sounds familiar, you're not alone!

The great news is, we can break the cycle!

It's time to work smart, not hard!

Working smart means getting adequate sleep, addressing any underlying mental health issues that may arise, and eating nutritious food that fuels you adequately without the need of stimulants.

It may mean not having as many client sessions or diversifying your skillset to work with a subset of clients that suit your capabilities more specifically. It could mean building 15 minutes of meditation into your schedule after every three client sessions in a day.

It's all about finding what works for you, which is what we should be encouraging in our clients.

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Flic Manning

Flic Manning is a Wellness Author, Speaker and Entrepreneur. In her presentations and book, she shares not only 30 years of training as a Wellness Advocate, Neuroplastician, Holistic Pain Management Facilitator, Performer, Fitness and Dance educator, but also her own personal experiences in managing Crohn's disease, chronic pain, mental health disorders, and her journey as an Entrepreneur. To learn more visit flicmanning.com

Working smart is about recognising your humanity and nurturing that which makes you human.

When you fuel the things that make you human, you position yourself for a higher quality of life. One that is reflected in your relationships, your finances, your business model and in the (sustainable) quality of life achieved by your clients. Everything is connected.

Consider this my call to arms

Understand and apply the knowledge that there is a connection between your quality of life and the quality of life for those in your care. And where clients see a higher quality of life, not only will they stay for the longer term, their success will attract others.

So, if you want to be your best, give your best, encourage the best and see that bottom line tick up, start embracing your humanity today.

Experiment and determine what works for you, and you will be blown away by the impact this has on you, your clients, your business and the world around you. ♦