

Off the **CLOCK**



Weighty Issues

IGNORING YOUR PHYSICAL HEALTH CAN TAKE A TOLL ON PROFESSIONAL PRODUCTIVITY—IF YOU LET IT.

by Mary Helen Tibbs

IT'S A STUDY IN CONTRASTS: Memphis is home to some of the most successful entrepreneurs and businesspeople in the world, yet it is also ranked time and again as one of the fattest cities in America. How can a population that produces prolific profits share such a dubious honor? Does professional success come at the expense of, well, everything else?

Busy people often succeed at the cost of other areas of their lives. Less free time. Less vacation time, and sadly, even less time with their families. But does it have to be this way? More importantly, should it?

According to Tonya Tittle, the answer is a resounding "No."

And she should know. Not only is Tittle a certified health and fitness instructor with the American College of Sports Medicine, this workout guru with a master's in exercise science is also a small business owner, not to mention the mother of a 9-month-old child. Simply put, she knows firsthand the toll that running a business can take, but this, she says, is no

excuse for putting your health on a backburner. "If I don't make excuses as a business owner and a new mom, you shouldn't either."

"Sitting at a computer all day will take a huge toll on your overall health and well-being," says Tittle, the owner and director of training of Energy Fitness, a gym and haven for busy professionals seeking guidance in the workout department. "At some point, you have to take responsibility for yourself."

So what should you expect when you visit a personal trainer for the first time?



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Illustration by JOSEF GAST

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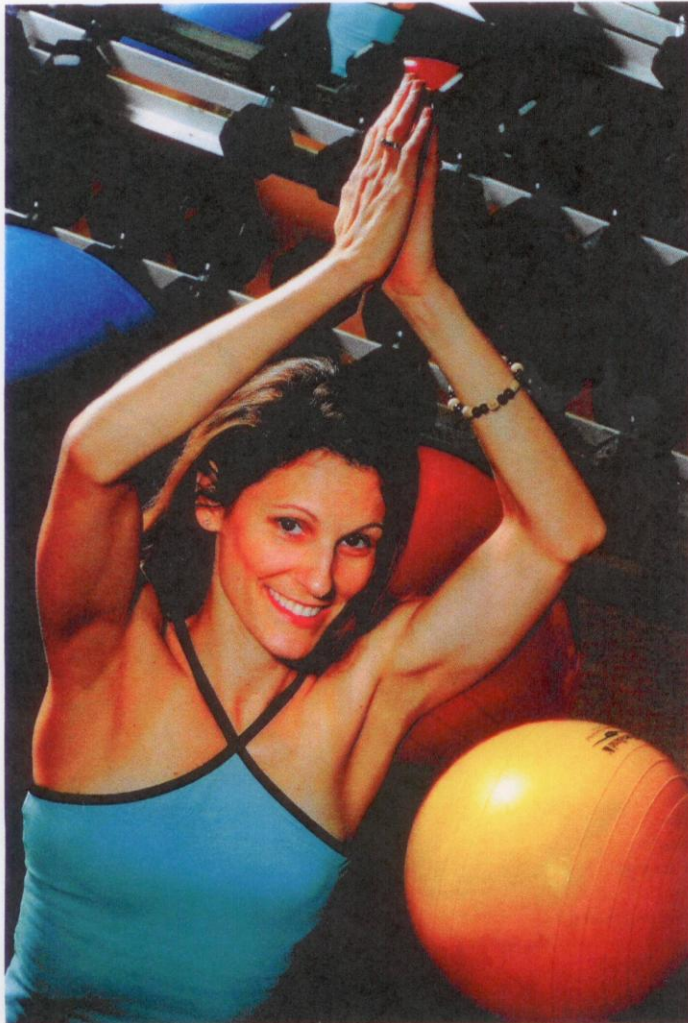
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OCTOBER 4 - 8 THE STANFORD CHAMPIONSHIPS at the Racquet Club of Memphis. Part of the Outback Champions Cup Series, it's the fourth venue on a five-city pro tour featuring tennis stars Jim Courier, **John McEnroe**, and Mats Wilander, among others, battling in a five-day round robin tournament.

MR. OCTOBER 57

Photograph by JUSTIN FOX BURKS



Before one weight is lifted or lunge executed, expect an hour-long physical assessment. "How else are we going to know your needs, your personality, or your physical capacity?" asks Tittle. This assessment goes beyond the standard family medical history; it's also a personality inquiry. "We ask what we call the 'Big 12,' questions," explains Tittle. "Do you tend to procrastinate? Are you easily discouraged? Are you seeking immediate gratification or looking for long-term goals?" she says. Only then will a trainer know how to shape

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your workouts and tailor them to your needs. "It's impossible to train any two people in the same way."

Sessions with a trainer at Tittle's facility are available in either 30-minute or hour-long increments. Since the majority of Energy's clients are business owners, their time is often flexible, but the most coveted time slots for most clients are pre-work hours — 6 or 7 a.m. — and the after-work slots, between 5 and 7 p.m. Lunchtime also sees a slew of busy professionals squeezing in workouts instead of going out for lunch.

But working out in the middle of a workday? Many shun the idea of getting sweaty, then returning to work. "I have plenty of lunchtime clients that do a 30-minute session, then hit the showers. Excuses are excuses. If you want something badly enough, you'll find a way to make it work."

Still hesitant about committing to a workout schedule? Consider this: Not only does your body see results, your productivity at work could reap rewards as well.

"I have clients who tell me over and over how they can really feel the impact of missing a workout," Tittle says. "Think about it, though. When you get your blood pumping, it's also pumping oxygenated blood to the brain. You're also alleviating stress that builds throughout the week. What I hear most often is that clients feel more alert after a workout, and make better decisions. For busy, highly motivated people, it's really a no-brainer."

And if you're thinking that the luxury of a personal trainer falls outside your budget, you might be surprised to learn just how reasonable the going rates are today. At Energy Fitness, for example, a private 30-minute session runs \$37, while an hour is \$58. Want to cut the rate even more? Grab a buddy for a doubles session and the rates drop to \$39 for an hour. Consider eating your lunch at your desk and working out for a half hour, and you've recouped the cost of lunches out while simultaneously improving your health and productivity level.

At the end of the day, though, the choice to succeed is up to the individual. "Fitness is an all-encompassing state of mind," says Tittle. "You have to take ownership of your own life and health, and figure out what's a priority to you. We can take charge for one hour, but the other 23 are up to you."

And that advice is worth its weight in gold.

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OCTOBER 17 THE FREEDOM AWARDS are given by the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis to those "who have distinguished service and sacrifice in the civil and human rights arena." Previous freedom award recipients are Bill Clinton, Oprah Winfrey, and Bono. This year, acclaimed musician **Stevie Wonder** will be honored.