NOTES ON YOUR TRAINING

While technique is the most important thing to focus on when training, there are definitely other factors worth paying attention to and understanding in order to get more out of your workout.

Most of your workouts will be presented in video form, so you can watch how each exercise is done.

What you will find is you can easily modify every workout to suit your needs, regardless of whether you're completely new to training, extremely experienced, have minimal equipment, are training at home or at a gym, and even if you have an injury.

In this document I'll outline the following for you:

- How the workouts 'work' and ideal weekly structure
- Workout progression and my program design
- Where to start
- Modifying the workouts to suit your needs
- Understanding terms and abbreviations
- Posture, core and technique
- Injuries
- Incidental exercise
- What to do if you're still unsure of something

HOW THE WORKOUTS 'WORK'

There are 4 different styles of workouts:

- Body Sculpt (for building and toning lean muscle, and burning fat at the same time, some will be written for the gym and some for home)
- Metabolic Madness (fat burning session also designed to enhance your metabolism ongoing; designed for home but can be done at the gym)
- Burn (as above, but designed for the gym)
- Shred (cardio/interval based fat-burning session, for home or gym)
- Wind Down (recovery and mind/body session for home or gym)

Gym Workouts

Each week there will be 3 specific gym-based programs, and 2 additional sessions which can be used either at home or at the gym.

Home Workouts

Each week there will be 2 specific gym-based programs, and 2 additional sessions which can be used either at home or at the gym.

The typical breakdown is gym, gym, home, home, gym, home/gym, home/gym.

EQUIPMENT FOR AT HOME

The recommended minimum equipment for at home is a set of adjustable dumbbells (about $90-$100 at Rebel), and a kettlebell between 8-24kg depending on how conditioned you are.

To choose the right kettlebell, test how many times you can swing it. The correct weight you should be able to swing 20 times but not more than 30 without needing rest.

You can use a kettlebell instead of dumbbells if necessary, and vice versa although some of the kettlebell exercises really are easier and safer with kettlebells.

If you choose to have no equipment you will need to use just body weight or else household items. **Please bear in mind that the philosophy of Woman Incredible is to include strength training, which is why this minimum equipment is recommended.**

Other items that will be useful are:

- Some kind of step (I use a milk crate)
- Some kind of bench (I use a banana lounge or else just lie on a towel on the grass!)
- A skipping rope

Using the workouts

Success does not depend on doing each workout in the order you receive it! Based on where and when you're training you may like to save workouts and even re-use workouts. I also do not expect you to train 7 days per week … the Wind Down session is a day of 'intense' training, and it's fine to have another 1-2 days like this.

That being said I do think we are designed to move every day, hence the daily workouts as well as the fact that many of them can be made quite short.

The overall structure of your week may be something like this:

- 2-3 Body Sculpt sessions per week
- 1-2 metabolic or burn sessions and/ OR
    - 1-2 cardio sessions
- 1-2 Wind Down sessions per week

You can decide which days work for you for different workouts, and you should listen to your body as to when you need an off day or a Wind Down day. This may change week to week depending on sleep, stress, nutrition and so on – it does not and should not be one set way for always!

WORKOUT PROGRESSION AND MY PROGRAM DESIGN

The workouts are designed to help you progress over time in the following areas:

- Strength
- Power
- Aerobic fitness
- Anaerobic fitness
- Cardiovascular fitness in general
- Posture
- Awareness and technique
- Enjoyment ☺

I'm a big believer in working off a program that changes every 2-4 weeks when it comes to strength or 'Body Sculpting' training.

What you will notice is that your Body Sculpt workouts are repeated throughout each Transformation Module.

For example, module 1 lasts 3 weeks and your Body Sculpt workouts are repeated weekly through this period. Of these, 2 are gym-based and 1 is home-based (can be repeated 2-3 times through the week).

You will notice that some of the variables (i.e. rest time) change with each week, the assumption being that you are adapting to the workout.

The 'Shred' session is often also repeated over a 2-4 week period, in order for you to track your improvement and 'beat' your previous time.

The 'Metabolic Madness', 'Burn' and 'Windown' sessions will change week to week and aim to keep you on your toes mentally as well as physiologically!

WHERE TO START

In your dashboard, under 'downloads' there is a self-assessment video and written overview. I'd recommend you do this within your first 1-2 weeks, and then come back to it monthly. It's a great way of tracking your progress!

There is also the option to upload your measurements within your VIP profile page. You may put this off or think you'd rather not do it, but PLEASE don't. Accountability is crucial on any success journey, and what gets measured gets tracked. In my experience, clients who measure regularly reach their goals quicker, and with greater ease.

MODIFYING THE WORKOUTS TO SUIT YOU

If you're new to training or have had a break from training

You may find it preferable to perform some of the exercises with low or even no weights. Technique is your focus.

With complicated or inherently difficult exercises (like push ups on toes) I will always show another option (like push ups on knees). Remember the main thing is technique.

Using the highest suggested rest time, or even higher if necessary is also a good idea.

Another suggestion is to complete just 2 sets of everything rather than 3-4.

If you're very well conditioned!

Use the lowest suggested rest time. If it's a 'body sculpt' workout, don't go below the suggested rest time. If it's a shred, metabolic or burn session, feel free to have zero rest as long as your technique remains sound.

Aim to complete the full recommended amount of sets per workout if time allows for it.

UNDERSTANDING TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Tempo: 4010 would mean 4 seconds on the 'eccentric', or resistance part of the movement, 0 second pause after that, 1 second on the 'concentric' or pushing/pulling part of the movement, and 0 second pause at the top. I.e. 4 seconds on the way down of your squat, pause for 0, up for one and pause for 0 before beginning again. Remember – pause for 0 in between reps means pause for 0, not stop and take a big breath or look around!

If you see 'X' it means 'as fast as possible'

Rest: rest time means 30 (or allocated) seconds before you **begin** the next exercise. Not 30 and then start getting ready ☺

'A1 and A2': where you see A1, A2 or B1, B2, means you alternate back and forth between those 2 exercises for the required amount of sets, before then moving on the next letter.

Substitutions: if you cannot get or do not have the desired equipment, you may switch A1 and A2 with B1 and B2 (for example), and so on. You may also need to work around not using certain machines, i.e. do DB calf raises off a step instead of machine if you don't have the machine.

Here are some descriptions of common terms I will be using:

- Abbreviations: DB means dumbbell
- Std means standard
- BB means barbell
- Snatch grip means as wide as you can
- For step-ups, medium low or high means height of the step
- Plantarflexed means toes pointing down away from your body
- If you see 1 ¼ for rep, it means do an extra quarter of each rep as directed
- A split squat looks like a lunge; it just means you keep your feet still once in position and just go up and down. Your front hamstring should touch your calf
- Pronated means palms down or toward your body, neutral means neutral, supinated means palms out and open. If it's referring to your body position, supine means body facing up and prone means facing down
- A Romanian deadlift is a deadlift with straight legs or just a very slight bend. It's very important to maintain your neutral spine position and only go down as far as you can.

POSTURE, CORE AND TECHNIQUE

While I definitely encourage you to push yourself to the max, losing control of your posture and your technique is a recipe for disaster.

Here are some pointers that apply to all exercises, and will ensure you get the most out of your training and are only sore in a 'good' way!

1. At all times: maintain a neutral spine position, which means a slight lordotic curve in your lower back.

If you feel your back curving excessively or rounding out, stop and pause or decide if you may need to drop the weight. Good technique consists of a neutral spine, shoulders down and relaxed, belly button lightly drawn in.

2. Breathing: try to breathe in through the nose and out through pursed lips at the moment of exertion. Do not breathe in while exerting yourself under load; you will leave yourself with a 'naked spine'

3. Core: I will include specific abdominal exercises in your programs, but the great thing about weight and circuit workouts is you should always be using your core! Your core supports your spine, so even if you don't care about a flat tummy it's important! Activate your core by lightly drawing your belly button into your spine. You can do this after an inhale breath. Aim to hold it in through the 'exertion' part of the movement. Over time you should automatically start to hold your core in while training and even just in everyday life!

INJURIES

All serious injuries should, of course, be overseen by your health practitioner. You will no doubt have been given prescribed rehab exercises, and also told what to avoid. Follow this advice!

That aside, some of the common injuries and what to pay attention to are:

- **Low back problems:** following the above postural advice for your back will eliminate much back pain, so that is the place to start. You may find you need to make some substitutions such as using dumbbells instead of barbells for exercises such as squats and lunges. The main thing is that while it's fine to work within mild discomfort you should never push through pain. Listen to your body and modify accordingly, even if it means completing certain exercises with a limited range.

- **Dodgy shoulders:** If you have injured your should you may need to use light weights or a limited range for shoulder presses, lateral raises, front raises, and bent over raises. For other upper body exercises focus on activating the other relevant upper body muscles, i.e. your mid-upper back, your arms, your chest. This will reduce the demands made on your shoulders.

  The main thing is that while it's fine to work within mild discomfort you should never push through pain. Listen to your body and modify accordingly, even if it means completing certain exercises with a limited range.

- **Dodgy knees:** Squats, lunges, leg press and hack squats will likely all be doable, but you may need to use dumbbells instead of barbells and shorten the range of movement. Leg extensions, which I won't often prescribe anyway, are best avoided. Just cut them out of the program.

  As with all injuries, the main thing is that while it's fine to work within mild discomfort you should never push through pain. Listen to your body and modify accordingly, even if it means completing certain exercises with a limited range.

INCIDENTAL EXERCISE

There is research to suggest that some people use exercise as a reason to sit around more for the rest of the day, as well as to indulge their sweet or 'treat' tooth.

Now I know this would never happen to you, but I do still want to mention the importance of incidental exercise and just being 'an active person'.

Achieving fantastic health and a certain physical shape is, in the greatest part, dependent on good nutrition. "Abs are made in the kitchen" truly is a saying to live by.

That being said, you are designed to move every day. To a large extent this should just be natural everyday movement.

What this means is that if your job or everyday activities do NOT require much movement then the onus is on you:

- Get up every 45-60 minutes and move for 5 minutes. Bodyweight exercises, stretching, walking – something!
- Take the stairs not the lift
- Park further away or walk instead of taking public transport
- Get up 10 minutes earlier and do some light stretches before starting your day
- If you think you don't have time to complete your daily workout, do half of it. Or even a quarter. 10 minutes really IS better than nothing
- Get in the mindset of being an active person, someone who constantly uses their body

FURTHER QUESTIONS

Do you have a question that I haven't covered? Please email me at kat@womanincredible.com!