



CAN A Workout

REALLY MAKE YOU

Better in Bed?

I say definitely yes. And so does my guy.

BY JANENE MASCARELLA

I was a fitness zombie. Uniform: Oversize tee shirt, faded yoga pants, ponytail. Activity: Spinning some days; the treadmill others. The gym had become another annoying to-do, like a sink full of dishes.

Everything changed the day I looked through a studio window at a Zumba class. I knew that a lot of my friends were hooked—um, my mom had been doing it—yet I'd never had

any interest. But these people were *smiling*. My gaze fixated on the instructor's perfectly toned tush, and all I could think was *Must learn to shakey shakey*.

I went into the studio, positioning myself as close to the door—and as far from the mirror—as possible. I was a fumbling fool, stutter-stepping through a fusion of dance styles. Still, something clicked: I was having fun at the gym.

For the next class, I ditched the frumpy tee shirt and went full sexpot: cleavage, lip gloss, shiny hair serum. I headed to the front row ready to commit fully to the moves. It paid off. Mid-Bollywood-style body roll, I felt something I never had before...*Hey, I'm effing hot!*

Instead of cringing at my curves in the mirror, I exaggerated them with every cha-cha. I didn't feel fat or frumpy or tug on my clothes. In fact, I spied some sexy sideboob.

Untangled from my own inhibitions, I came home from the gym feeling feisty. I seduced my unsuspecting hubby, who was shaving in the bathroom, with some slow hip circles up and down his leg. "What on earth are you doing," he said, "and do you mind if I join in?"

The flirtier I got in class, the more assertive I got in bed. It was a life-altering realization for me, but not to the experts. Exercise moves that engage your hips, glutes, core, and pelvis—like dance workouts and like the moves on the next two pages—really do lead to hotter, extra-orgasmic sex.

"Strengthening these areas boosts arousal and pleasure by improving circulation and blood flow," says Tina Penhollow, PhD, an associate professor in the department of exercise science and health promotion at Florida Atlantic University. "It can also increase endurance and flexibility, which is helpful for experimenting with agile sex positions." (Yes! What she said.)

"Flirtatious fitness" puts you in touch with your body and how to use it during sex, says Michelle P. Maidenberg, PhD, a psychotherapist in Westchester and NYC. "And with less need for control," she adds, "there can be openness to longer and more sensual foreplay and intercourse, more emotional intensity, and greater connectedness."

The truth is, it's not about my performing better for my husband. My skyrocketing confidence has boosted my own desire and pleasure. And post-sex, instead of a hurried dash across the room to scoop up my clothing, I stroll about the room with the lazy swagger of a cowgirl. When you think about it, isn't that why we sweat it out at the gym—to feel sexy in our own skin?

Where to Get Your Dance On...



BUTI FITNESS
(BUTIFITNESS.COM)
Celeb fans are hooked on this hybrid of tribal-influenced dance sequences and Hatha yoga. You can find it in 17 states.

305 FITNESS
(305FITNESS.COM)
Sculpt and Latin sessions are offered at this studio, which also hosts pop-up parties around New York City.

MAZI DANCE FITNESS CENTER
(MAZIDANCEFITNESS.COM)
The fittest chicks in Chicago flock here for classes like Ballerina Fight Club and Hip-Hop Cardio.

DOONYA
(DOONYA.COM)
Bollywood-style dance classes are on the menu at these studios in Los Angeles, New York City, and Washington, D.C.