

timeout



the joys of JAZZERCISE

One kick-ball-change kept her faithfully coming back for more. So why is she calling it quits now?

By Kim Acosta

I quit Jazzercise today. I had my exit strategy all worked out, but in true superpositive Jazzer form, the class managers were as kind and cheery as if I'd told them I wanted to register myself and 10 friends for the next JazzerJam convention. My excuses came gushing out anyway: "It's just that my company pays for a certain gym membership that's two blocks from work and ..." Wait – just who was I trying to convince?

My roommate had dragged me to my first Jazzercise class six years ago. "But my *mother* does Jazzercise," I protested from my worn spot on the couch. "It's in a *senior center*, for God's sake." Finally, though, I gave in and was hooked from my first kick-ball-change because, hon-

estly, it was fun. True, half the class sings along; there's a move in which you actually lick your finger, place it on your butt and make a sizzling sound; and the average age is at least 45.

But I couldn't ignore the fact that I sweated, lost some weight and discovered what my hip flexor was. I also got a chance to shamelessly groove to my guilty pleasure – Top-40 music – and

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our peppy teacher somehow managed to seem cool even while chasséing in purple spandex shorts and ending his class-schedule e-mails with SYOTDF! (See You On The Dance Floor!)

Jazzercise, especially in L.A., where fitness trends are born, is, uh, not so hip. Somewhere along the way, though, I stopped caring. It kept me moving four times a week, and after a hard day at the office, I found myself looking forward to each energizing class.

Equipped with intimate knowledge of my muscle groups, improved cardio endurance and though still packing 15 stubborn extra pounds, I've decided to leave the Jazzercise nest anyway. I realize that now, pre-babies and sore knee joints, is the time to physically challenge myself and, just maybe, discover a new workout to love. And yes, after six years even jazz hands can become mundane.

My new fitness craze? Spinning. True, there are no leg warmers, no free key chain on my birthday. Yet as I push harder, chest heaving, to the top of that first "hill," I realize how much I'd taken my body for granted. Despite Jazzercise, my thighs were still chubby, but such imperfections were silenced for a glorious 50 minutes, overpowered by a newfound appreciation for just how fast my legs can go. And, recently, thanks to those mind-clearing sweat-fests, I've discovered something even more exciting than my hip flexor – visible proof of ab muscles. On *my* body!

I can't say I won't miss Jazzer's friendly approach to working out. So I imagine that someday my hankering to glide-step to the latest boy-band hit will kick in again, and I'll happily SYOTDF!

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