



I Take Thee In Fitness And In Health

Do couples who train together really stay together? Not necessarily—but sharing a passion for a healthy lifestyle can add to an unbreakable bond.

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DYLAN & RACHAEL

Dylan Rees, 33, Event & Entertainment Manager, and Rachael Sherriff, 39, Creator of Seakiss Swimwear.

Dylan and Rachael have your modern day love story: they met on Tinder! Fitness was a key part of their relationship from the get-go. "We first bonded surfing together in Dubai and at the wave pool and then did some surf travel to Sri Lanka, Oman, Fujairah and Australia. We also trained together doing body combat and CrossFit," says Rachael. Nowadays, with Rachael being 7 months pregnant, the couple doesn't get to work out together as often, but they still find a way to stay fit separately. When there's a swell, Dylan drops her off to go on a solo 4km flat water paddle whilst he surfs. "We both miss surfing together but we know it isn't long until we can be encouraging each other in the line-up again and both teaching our little one how to surf!"

Setting a habit to workout together has definitely had a positive impact on their relationship. "We find if we train together it doesn't feel like work and we can push each other. It is also nice quality time so we can catch up with each other," Rachael says. However, for the fit sea-loving couple, it isn't always just about catching waves together. In their downtime, they enjoy watching Netflix and chilling with their four Yorkies. In Dylan and Rachael's case, it can definitely be said that a couple that surfs together stays together! "We have found having the same interests has really helped us to be great friends, first and foremost. We have a deep respect for each other, and by being active, it has created a healthy base for us as a couple. We can't imagine our life any other way!"



MIKKEL & ANNE

Mikkel Petersen, 30, CrossFit Coach at CrossFit Sands, and Co-Founder at DXB Swimming 101, and Anne Petersen, 31, Co-Founder at DXB Swimming 101. Anne and Mikkel met like many do, at work, but it was really after they took the time to get to know each other that they became inseparable. Fitness played a vital part in their relationship from the very beginning, as Mikkel is a CrossFit coach and Anne would always attend his classes. "To this day he says that he was attracted to the fact that I not only did CrossFit but also knew how important that part of his life is to him as a professional athlete," Anne says. But it was their mutual love for water sports that led the married couple to open their own business. "I really love that I get to work with my wife every day," says Mikkel. They work out together and Anne considers her husband her own personal coach: "A big bonus for me is that he knows my health background better than anyone else, so he knows exactly how to challenge me. He also knows how stubborn I am so he can also be quick to tell me when I need to slow down," she says. But they also find it important for each to do their own thing sometimes. Anne will often do yoga and Pilates, whilst Mikkel sticks more to CrossFit and weight-lifting. But on the water, you'll always see them wake boarding or surfing together! "It's incredibly important that we are both in sync as it can be very hard to reach any goal if your partner is doing the opposite to you," says Mikkel. Their love for fitness and one another is one based on support and respect. "Sadly, 12 years ago I was diagnosed with a life-threatening autoimmune illness that turned my world upside down. Marrying someone who supports me mentally, physically and emotionally means everything," adds Anne.

When they are not training, the two lovers enjoy going to the movies and they simply love food and sharing their joy of enjoying a good meal together. Although not all couples necessarily need to work out together, Mikkel says, "For us, yes. We are definitely a couple who train together and stay together!"



BRIAN & LINDA

Brian Cochrane, 34, and Linda Chambers, 37. Co-Founders of ISIX8. Brian and Linda met at a TRX master training event in Dusseldorf, Germany. "He was 'hot cycling boy' and apparently I was 'hot BodyBalance chick.' We had similar minds from the start," Linda laughs. An active lifestyle was a crucial part of their relationship from the very start. When Brian lived in London and Linda in Dubai, they would send each other challenges for the next time they met, such as who could have the best six pack—which Brian won! Their similarities bring them together and the differences complement each other. "We have similar interests but also have very diverse likes too. I'm heavily into yoga and Bri loves his boxing. We really are Yin and Yang—although I'm *sure* Bri will argue that he's the calm one!" says Linda. Considering that Brian and Linda have co-founded ISIX8, their own fitness studio, it is surprising that they don't work out together that often. "I think we both enjoy different ways of training, which I think is actually quite healthy. I do like attending a class that Linda is teaching and vice versa. Because I know its going to be a great training session if she's in charge," says Brian.

In their free time, the fit couple enjoys doing everything together. "She is my best friend so I love experiencing things with her, whether its travelling to new countries, checking out the latest cool thing to do here in Dubai, or even watching a movie at home. Quality time is priceless," says Brian. Another one of their fun habits is people-watching, according to Linda. In the couple's opinion, couples who train together don't necessarily stay together. "But couples who both work out helps massively in dealing with the stress of daily life, business, married life, and so on," says Brian. "Being a support network for your partner's fitness goals is also a huge factor in maintaining a happy, healthy relationship," Linda adds.

LUKE & CLAIRE

Luke Morris, 32, Founder of Wildwood, and Claire Falconer, 29, Personal Trainer; Co-Founders of Wild Body Active.

It is only natural that a couple that met at the gym would value sharing a healthy lifestyle—and that's the case for Luke and Claire. "We exchanged super romantic words like 'Are you using that bench or can I jump in on the cable machine once you're done?'," says Claire. Since their interactions were all entirely gym related Luke likes to tell people that their first official meeting place was a few months later at a mutual friend's birthday party at Blue Marlin. "Both of us used to like a good night out back then...how things have changed," says Claire. Surprisingly, fitness actually played a small part in their relationship at first, as they preferred to go out on more 'normal' types of days. However as they got to know each other better and realized how many common interests they shared, dinner dates started to turn into wake boarding and camping trips to Oman. Now they mainly enjoy outdoorsy activities.

"We generally tend to work out separately as Claire's PT schedule varies quite a bit and so we never can guarantee if we'd be able to work out together at a set time," says Luke, who is also a GuavaPass ambassador. However, whenever she gets a break, they try to do outdoor activities together such as HIIT sessions outside of their building or on the beach. The couple and business partners are also starting to practice more yoga as a team, to increase flexibility. "[Our attitude towards health] is really important as it means all our passions and goals and how we want to live our lives are essentially aligned," says Luke. If they are not on an adventure, the couple love a Netflix night. "We basically lie on the sofa and watch documentaries about the environment. Then to get over our depression of that we then watch something more inspirational like overcoming personal challenges or stuff like SAS: *Who Dares Wins*," Luke says. "Sharing a similar mindset and outlook on life helps massively with our relationship."





CAMERON & JADE

Cameron LaFontaine, 25, Personal Trainer at The Warehouse Gym, and Jade Elward, 24, Pole Fitness and Aerial Instructor at Polercise Dubai and Creative Director at Rumours Entertainment Dubai.

Cameron and Jade first met at work, introduced by other trainers at The Warehouse Gym where he works as a PT and she teaches pole and aerial classes, but it wasn't until they bumped into each other at a bar that their romance really blossomed. "We continued to see each other afterwards, which leads us to today," says Jade.

Having an active lifestyle is definitely a vital part of their relationship. The fact that both Cameron and Jade have always led very active lives aided them in adapting easily into each others' routine. "After a year we have gelled and work together as a team," she says. Although they both incorporate fitness into their every day lives, their training is actually very different from one another. "Being a contortionist and aerial acrobat, I train myself in my fields of expertise. Aerial hoop, silks, pole dancing, contortion and hand balancing," says Jade. Cameron's training, on the other hand, mainly consists of a mixture of strength and hypertrophy training. Whenever they can, they still try to get a workout in together.

"I have roped Cameron into doing partner acrobatics with me, and surprisingly, we are really good," says Jade. "I am hoping that one day we will have a routine which we can perform." The couple also does a circuit style training session outdoors together once a week, and when they aren't working out, they like relaxing by the pool, going for a night out at the movies, or having a bowling match. "We believe it is very important to share the same values and interests in our relationship, from preparing our meals to supporting each other to stay motivated to reach our fitness goals. Even just being in the gym at the same time is a way for us to spend more time together!" Jade says.



ROMAN & TONI

Roman Wehbe, 35, and Toni Rogan Wehbe, 33, Business Owners of PRO Physique. Roman was a friend of Toni's family for years before the couple got together. "It took me four and a half years to get her phone number, then she eventually gave it to me," Roman laughs. Fitness is definitely a key part of the married couple's relationship, and the support they share through fitness strengthens their relationship. "It's great that we can train together and motivate each other even in competitions—we like to do events together and always support each other in whatever sport we participate in," says Toni. Time permitting, the couple loves to train together. This was especially important when Toni was participating in *Fighting Fit*, Dubai's popular boxing reality show and Roman was there to give her that extra push even during the tougher times. They like to do everything together, from boxing to CrossFit to weight-lifting. "It's hard to find a woman who can do the same things as me... and better! I couldn't have imagined myself with someone that doesn't train or look after her health. Toni is my perfect match," says Roman.

Roman and Toni are definitely best friends as well as partners—they do pretty much everything together, and especially enjoy going to the cinema and sharing a good steak at a nice restaurant. "I'm a big believer in couples that train together staying together," says Toni, "We do things together as a team. We have the same beliefs and same mentality—if one of us is down, the other one picks them up and so on." "I think if you have a relationship like that, you will always have a recipe for success, and we as a couple are always striving to be better athletes and most importantly, better people," Roman adds.

MARCUS & HOLLY

Marcus Smith, 38, Founder of InnerFight, and Holly, 40, Founder of Smith St Paleo.

If ever a pair embodied the cliché that those who work out together, stay together, it's Holly and Marcus Smith. "It's one of the clichés in fitness I hate the most—the words—but the meaning behind them is absolutely true. Lions hang out with lions. It's just the way it is," Marcus says. The pair met on a flight to Bangkok; Marcus was flying out to play in a rugby tournament and Holly was four months into her new role as cabin crew for Emirates. They tied the knot seven years ago.

Marcus is well known in Dubai for founding InnerFight, a gym which offered up intense circuit-based training, traditional Olympic lifts that not only helped push his personal performance but also allowed his clients to develop a broad range of fitness skills, that grew into a fully-fledged CrossFit affiliation in 2012. Holly left Emirates last year to launch Smith St Paleo, a website dedicated to her passion for healthy and nutritious food. She launched a range of paleo energy balls last year, and in January released a range of ready meals for home delivery. Professionally and personally, it's been a tremendous year of transition for the couple. Holly is home a lot more now—something she cherishes after spending so many years living out of a suitcase. "We've both had our routines—so we've both had to make some adjustments. But it's just been nice going to bed together, eating meals together. I was just so happy to be in my own house, in my own bed and in my own kitchen that suddenly three months had passed and we hadn't eaten out," she said. The pair didn't really start working out together until around 2009. Marcus explains, "We'd pop to the gym on a Thursday or Friday and do different things. I saw a massive difference in her when we started working out together. At the same time, Holly was working on looking at our nutrition—so it worked out perfectly." Holly adds, "With the food, it's incredibly important that we're on the same page. I've seen it with my friends and my family where one partner is maybe trying to follow a healthier way of eating, and I've seen the struggle. They end up cooking two different dinners, then they have to cook something separate for the kids, and it becomes a cycle that's just too hard. To have that support is extremely important." Marcus adds, "I've often wondered whether I've pressured Holly into bending to my lifestyle. I guess in some ways she is—she puts up with a lot—but I also think that we complement each other really well. She's trying to get me to eat things that make us better, and I'm working the physical side of the equation. I think some people may perceive what I do as selfish, and sometimes I do feel like that, but it's not like we're pushing bad habits or an unhealthy lifestyle."

Outside the gym, the pair relax by travelling as much as they can together. Holly explains, "The amount of places we've been to is fairly extensive, and it's been amazing. Other people might go to brunches or have expensive hotel stays, or have a fabulous shoe and handbag collection. We spend our money on travelling."

