

RightStart Classes throughout a Global Pandemic



Since the government announced that leisure centres had to close on 20th March 2020, many people found it difficult to find the motivation to continue exercising. In these strange and uncertain times, we were all having to think a little differently in our day to day lives. Many people had to learn how to use mobile phones, tablets, and computers to communicate with loved ones, and of course to keep joining in with their exercise classes. Everything seemed very scary and nothing seemed to stay the same for any length of time.

In the One Leisure Active Lifestyles Team, we had every faith in our loyal customers that they would be up for the challenge of using Zoom! After many phone calls to customers explaining how it works, we were able to get some of our older adult circuit and seated exercise classes online. Soon after this, the government announced we could meet in groups of 6 outdoors. This is when we launched our outdoor RightStart classes and what a joy it has been seeing all our lovely customers in person after all this time! Read Lynda's story about her ups and downs of 'lockdown life' and how she has adapted to the 'new normal'

"It is a truth, universally acknowledged, that I am an exceptionally lazy person! My idea of heaven is sitting in my chair, reading a book. However, after two and a half months of enforced idleness, even I was beginning to feel that a spot of exercise might be a good idea. Now, most of us know it is very difficult coming up with the motivation to do such things on your own. So, I surprised myself when I was thrilled to hear that the good folks at One Leisure were restarting their Right Start 5 classes, although in a slightly different format than we were used to. Right Start Zoom style! I can do that, I thought, I am a modern oldish person, I have got Zoom. So, I signed up and lo and behold, there was Michelle bright and lively to run us old(ish) folks through our paces. OK, the session got interrupted when she disappeared suddenly, but she eventually reappeared, and we gamely carried on. I did not know any of the people at the first session, but as the weeks have gone on, familiar faces have appeared, and it is so nice to see them. Dan has now taken over and I have to say one advantage of Zoom is that a) you don't have to physically go anywhere and b) you can mute yourself and no-one else can hear the agonised groans and creaks as you force your poor, stiff body into shapes it had forgotten it could make! The next week they announced we

would be having outdoor classes as well! Yay! It proved a bit challenging to get into the website and book onto a session, but with much assistance from Michelle and Hannah I was booked onto the very first outdoor session with Jackie! Which consisted of her and me - and some very dodgy looking weather! Again, as the weeks have gone on, more people are turning up and taking part and it is lovely to see friends again and hear what they have been doing in these strange and perplexing times. Most of us are older and many of us live alone, so the social aspect of getting back to class cannot be underestimated. OK, it is not the same as indoor classes because, apart from weights, there is none of the equipment we are used to, but it does not matter, there are other things we can do! What matters is that we are getting back to something approaching normal, trying to get our fitness levels up and I can only thank the One Leisure staff for the considerable efforts they have gone to on our behalves. Thank you all.”

Active Lifestyles are working to Government Guidelines to get the RightStart classes back up and running in more capacity and indoors when we are allowed, and it is safe to do so. Please continue to follow our social media for announcements on further developments.

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