

Original blog post at: <http://exmoorjane.blogspot.com/2011/03/bootcamp-in-which-i-discover-i-love.html>

March 2011

TUESDAY, 22 MARCH 2011

## Bootcamp - in which I discover I love hardcore exercise



It was one of those weird coincidences – you know, the ones I love so much.

An editor I used to work for had sent a round robin email to announce she was going freelance. Soon after I got a call from someone else on the list - an ex-editor now turned PR.

‘Long time no speak,’ she said. ‘I saw you on the email list and wondered if you might fancy going on a [bootcamp in Buckinghamshire?](#)’ she asked. ‘It’s run by this amazing woman called Julie Brealy.’

‘Hang on a flipping minute,’ said I. ‘I know Julie Brealy.’ When I’d damaged a tendon, she’d given me sports massage on it for weeks – down here on Exmoor. She was fab. She was also pretty hardcore. My Achilles got better out of sheer fear. But, hey, small world. It was obviously A Sign so I signed up. And promptly forgot all about it.

Then realised, in a mild state of panic, that March was whizzing along and I had a hot and fast approaching date with eight hours' exercise a day. Stumbled onto the train with a case full of trainers and my bodyweight in painkillers. Arrived at Latimer Place and was hurled straight into a circuit class followed by – oh yes – Zumba.



I don't think I've talked about Zumba on the blog. About my mad love affair with the wildest, sweatiest, dirtiest dance going. But you can read about it on my Lady blog [here](#). There was lots of Zumba on this weekend – four hours of it. Oh yes.

Anyhow. The weekend was a total blast. Just wonderful. There were twelve of us – all women but all ages, sizes and shapes. Some revoltingly fit, some not so. You work at your own pace, encouraged rather than pushed. No noses in the mud; no screaming and yelling. Best thing was trying out new classes and workouts. So it was thumbs up to kettlebells – yeah the Russian dead weight thingy you swing between your legs (very fetching). Thumbs down to bellydancing (I tried but I just can't shimmy my boobs in the opposite direction to my hips). Actually, nor could anyone else – we all looked desperately stiff and Anglo-Saxon (even the French and Swedes in the group). Thumbs up to gym sticks (a deep and brilliant stretch) and,

surprisingly, thumbs up to Jazzercise (bit of a blast). You know, I can't remember everything we did but there was a lot of it. There was also tons of food. You think you have to live on a couple of carrot sticks and the odd oatcake? Wrong. I seriously couldn't keep up.



At the end of the day we piled into the pool and swam and then jostled for room in the jacuzzi. Then crammed into the steam room and sauna. And laughed and laughed.

But, best of all – bliss upon bliss – I was working so hard that there was no room At All for the usual nonsense that flies through my head. I was in ‘no thought’ for such vast periods of time that the world transformed into a very pleasant place. So coming back home felt weird. What is this thing called ‘sitting on a chair at a PC?’ My muscles twitched; wanted to move. And my mind winced as the old crap came rushing back in as I unravelled over 100 emails and a slew of voicemails.

So I went to the gym. And talked to Trish who introduced me to Julie in the first place. ‘Did you like it?’ she asked, as I beat hell out of the exercise bike. ‘I loved it!’ I said. ‘Just the dog's bollocks.’ ‘Hmm,’ she replied. ‘Better do a week the next time.’

You know what? I'm severely tempted.

Brealy Bootcamps - give 'em a go!