


Original blog post at: http://www.lady.co.uk/mrs_muck_gets_her_nose_dirt

April 2011



JANE ALEXANDER

MRS MUCK

Jane Alexander is a journalist and the author of an obscene number of self-help books, including *The Overload Solution* (Piatkus) and *The Mind Body Spirit Miscellany* (Duncan Baird). Unfortunately she never follows her own advice and as a result lives in permanent chaos in 'the Bonkers House' on Exmoor with her husband, son, delinquent terrier (Asbo Jack) and his angelic counterpart the Soul Puppy (SP). When she's not dousing the dogs with Jo Malone to disguise the scent of fox poo, she writes spooky fiction.

Jane also blogs at <http://exmoorjane.blogspot.com> and spends far too much time on Twitter (@exmoorjane).

Mrs Muck gets her nose in the dirt

'Hey, fancy going to boot camp?' Six months ago I would have choked on my coffee at that question but things have changed. I've lost three stone since November and seem to have become some kind of weird exercise junkie. Not only have I joined the gym, taken up Zumba ([see earlier blog post](#)) and started hauling the SP on mammoth walks but I find myself doing star jumps while I'm waiting for the kettle to boil and bouncing on my Fitball while I watch the news. It's all rather disconcerting really.

So, when the boot camp question came up I found my hand waving itself vigorously in the air (with a weight attached to it) and my mouth saying, 'Yay! Pump it up! Bring it on!'

The rational part of me was still slightly apprehensive. Boot camp summons up visions of army fatigues, noses squashed in the mud and brutal sadists screaming 'another 20 press-ups you little scrote'. Brealy Bootcamps however are quite different. Yeah, it's around eight hours' of exercise a day but it's so well planned you don't get to the sobbing-in-a-heap-in-the-corner state. Honest (fingers not crossed behind back).

It's a brilliant way to try out new classes, to give things a go that you might normally dismiss. I was stunned to discover that I possess an inner Russian weightlifter as I huffed my way through the tough kettlebell routines. However my inner sinuous bellydancer and I had obviously parted company in a previous lifetime: my hips and boobs are incapable of shimmying in different directions. But hey ho, never mind. There was Jazzercise (I was totally rubbish at it but what a hoot) and circuits (ooh, the pain) and Pilates (streeetch) and gymsticks (more streeetch) and, oh I forget. But loads and loads – and all good fun.

Inevitably there were moments of sheer farce. Like when I thought I'd show off by demonstrating how to balance on top of a Fitball – and shot off the ball across the room to collide, legs akimbo, with a wall. And of sheer pain: thwacking a taut Dyna-band into wide-open eyes isn't the brightest idea.

We were a motley crew of ages, sizes, shapes and fitness levels. Some set off into the Buckinghamshire countryside at a run (with weighted rucksacks) while another bunch walked briskly, arms swinging. A small gaggle of us basically gossiped our way round the route and were so busy nattering we found ourselves in the middle of a wood with no idea how we got there – or how to get out. Each night we ended up in the Jacuzzi and the steam room, whimpering with laughter and sharing stories of pounds lost, running habits gained, new lives kicking off.

It was huge fun, wildly inspirational and, frankly, madly addictive. Best of all, when you work that hard, your mind simply switches off. Zen – with muscles. So what are you waiting for? Get to it, you filthy little scrotes!

Brealy Bootcamps: www.brealybootcamps.co.uk