

Tender TRAINER

by Vivien Santana Hughes

Exercise
expert
Tony
Cortés
says,
just do it.
And tells
you how

Photo: Actress Jane Sibbett by Carrie See



He threw away his wife's scale when she was obsessing too much about her weight. A personal trainer by trade, Tony Cortés acknowledges that exercising inside is boring. And what if a client told him she was just too darned tired to work out regularly? "I understand," he'd say. "You probably *are* too tired."

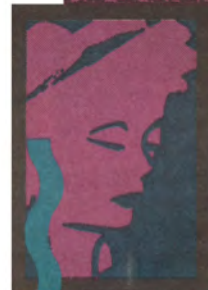
How can you not love this guy?

But don't think this doctor of definition is gonna let you off the hook that easily if fatigue is your excuse (exercise *is* his business, after all). The way to be less taxed by the demands of your day is to do more. "Your body will specifically adapt to the demands you impose on it," says Cortés. In other words, start exercising and chasing your toddler around the playground will seem less—well—tiring.

Cortés is probably best known for training Linda Hamilton to definition for *Terminator 2*. Since then, he's worked with the likes of Cher, Priscilla Presley and currently John Cusack. But he's not the Hollywood schmoozer I expected. Cortés eschews the Westside and lives in the eastern end of the San Gabriel Valley

with wife Lisa and their 5-month-old baby boy. He fell into this "celebrity" personal trainer thing by accident: A chance friendship with a producer ("I didn't know what he did") led to consideration for training Hamilton and—just like in the movies—he was hired.

Transforming Hamilton from new mom (who hadn't exercised much) to woman warrior in 13 weeks was a challenge but the results were so good, the filmmakers even changed her wardrobe to show off her biceps. And Cortés had a philosophy for his company, Specialized Exercise Training Systems: "Make every effort that you put out reap the benefits." Or, "train smart, not hard." This is a principle that he uses with all his clients bogged down by heavy scheduling, whether parents, executives—or both.



For those of us who can't afford his pricey \$115 per hour rates, here are Tony's tips for getting maximum results and (the tough one) sticking to the program.

- **Make exercise accessible.** When you have a baby, forget a gym unless it has childcare. Wear your workout clothes around the house—that way when you have 45 free minutes you're set to do your exercise video or whatever you have ready. No excuses.

- **Something is better than nothing.** "I start people who haven't been exercising at whatever they can tolerate." That may be just 10 minutes of aerobic exercise a day, two times a week. Begin with as little as possible so you feel comfortable.

- **Establish a routine.** Just like your baby thrives on a regular schedule, you will too. If it's haphazard you'll never get to it. But routinely doesn't have to mean at the same hour. Just remember that every day—or every other day—you know that you have to get in your exercise.

- **Work your heart.** If your schedule is really tight, forget the weight training and do your cardiovascular workout. The minimum time commitment: between 20 and 45 minutes of aerobic activity three days per week.

- **Stay in your target heart rate zone.** To get the best results from cardiovascular exercise, keep within 60 to 85 percent of your heart capacity. You can take your pulse while exercising or, better yet, use a heart rate monitor (see accompanying article) to give you a constant readout. You'll actually bum less fat if you

exercise above the maximum rate. To figure out your ideal aerobic zone, get out your calculator (the final numbers should be in the 20s):

$$220 - \text{your age} = \text{Maximum Heart Rate}$$

Take your resting pulse for 10 seconds

$$\text{MHR} - \text{resting pulse} = \text{Heart Rate Reserve}$$

$$\text{HHR} \times .60 + \text{resting pulse} + 6 =$$

minimum 10 second count

$$\text{FM} \times .85 + \text{resting pulse} + 6 =$$

maximum 10 second count

- **Keep up the variety.** Your heart is blind—it can't see what you're doing, it just knows it has to pump hard. Circuit aerobic training (15-minute segments on different machines) combats boredom. As long as you keep your heart rate up this works fine. "I like to mix it up: skier, rower, slide, bicycle." Any cardiovascular training is good as long as you don't use the same method too often (that is, if it's the only thing you do). That can result in overuse injuries. Cross training helps prevent this problem.

- **Work opposing muscle groups.** When training with weights, you need to rest for 30 seconds to one minute between sets. To speed up the process, work your back, for example, and then your chest or the front of your arm and then the back of your arm. "This way one muscle group rests while the other works, and you'll finish your sets in no time."

The bottom line: If you *really* want to get that body fat off, you're gonna have to put in the time. That's 45 minutes of aerobic activity four or five times per week. Throw in a twice-weekly workout with weights and you're set. But he is realistic: "The key to being fit is being honest." Only *you* know what you can accomplish on a regular basis.

No Plain Jane

Yes, she looks fabulous without a speck of makeup. Yes, her post-pregnancy figure is better than many of our pre-baby bods. And, yes, her job playing "attractive but ruthless" Hedly Newman on Fox TV's *Herman's Head* sounds pretty damn fun.

But I still couldn't hate her, because Jane Sibbett is so, well, nice. I kinda wanted to invite her to bring 10-month-old daughter Ruby to my playgroup.

Sibbett was shooting the series—while portraying a very non-maternal part—until her seventh month of pregnancy. When I was expecting, there was no hiding my protruding belly. What was it like to be pregnant and not be able to show it?

Frustrating, she says. "I wanted to revel in my pregnancy and I had to hide behind the big coats, desks.... I always had files in my hand. My skirts got shorter and my coats got bigger."

The writers didn't exactly panic when she (surprise!) sprung the news on them, but "the executive producer was a little concerned," Sibbett remembers. "I told him, 'I can do this.'"

Three-and-a-half weeks after having the baby, she was back to work, with Ruby on the set. "I was exhausted. Ruby has never really slept a lot. You learn with your super human powers that you only need three hours of sleep a night [laugh]!"

Getting back into her character's fitted wardrobe was much more gradual. Sibbett is realistic: "Yes, you are the 'little bimchette' on the show, and yes you've got to wear those bimchette clothes, but they had to be creative." When she was pregnant, her legs were the focus. "Then," shares Sibbett, "the 'maternal jugs.' I had no idea how large my breasts looked on television! Looking down, they're just the 'milk things.' I imagined I was my same small self." At Sibbett's request, the lens went back to the legs.

Although she had to fend off the camera operator, being a nursing mom is fulfilling for Sibbett. "I'm glad that I'm doing it. It's so helpful for Ruby and me to have that bonding." As a bonus she found that "there's no dieting. Nursing brought [the pregnancy weight] off quickly." And, to keep it off, she does make an effort to go to the gym.

Well, being a sex object is not for everyone. Some may call it demeaning. I wouldn't mind playing Hedly Newman once—just don't let it be when I'm pregnant.

—V.S.H.

