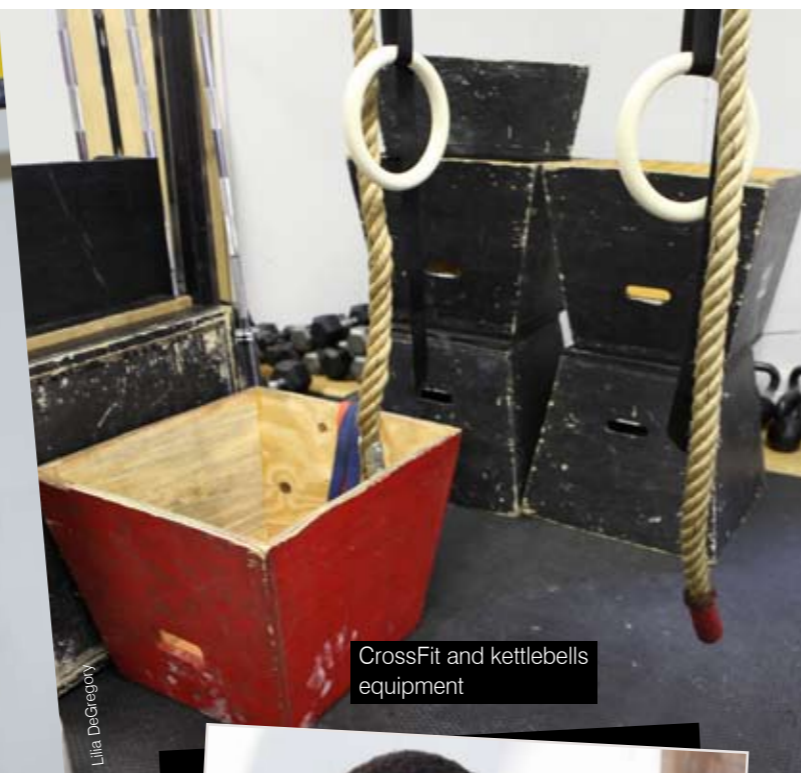
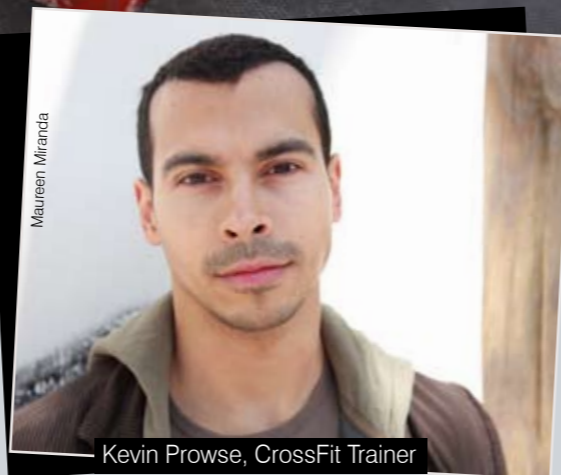




Allison Bojarski, CrossFit Trainer and Communications Director



CrossFit and kettlebells equipment



Maureen Miranda

Kevin Prowse, CrossFit Trainer

Reinvent your regime

Tired of your regular gym workout?
CHRISTY NYBERG introduces you to CrossFit and kettlebells.

A great workout reveals itself in numerous ways—beyond the obvious tone and fitness, it adds confidence to posture and results in a hydrated, fresh look. We look good and feel good when we exercise, but sometimes the routine becomes just that, a routine.

If you feel you've reached a plateau with your workout and you want to freshen up your exercise and your body, CrossFit and/or kettlebells are for you! I'll be candid, both CrossFit and kettlebells look intimidating, and I confess that even after months of practice, I still get a bit nervous before a class. But it's precisely that rush of adrenaline that makes the experience so worthwhile.

What Is CrossFit?

CrossFit is a strength and conditioning programme for general fitness and is designed to challenge your body. Workouts are typically timed and they include exercises such as push-ups, pull-ups, box jumps and squats. At the more extreme end, it includes handstand push-ups, weighted pull-ups or jumping squats. At first glance, you might think, "I could never do that!" but CrossFit can also be customised to suit your individual requirements, and one of the most exciting aspects of CrossFit is working towards being able to do something you never thought you could.

I sat down with CrossFit trainers Allison Bojarski and Kevin Prowse at CrossFit The Black Box, NYC to find out more.

Do you notice a difference in the ways that men and women typically approach CrossFit?

Allison Bojarski (AB): There are different self-imposed expectations — men feel like they should know how to do barbell exercises where women typically aren't embarrassed to learn...but these are generalisations. Women and men will both defy the expectations. There's so much variety!

CrossFit is sweaty, dirty and hard work. Do you see beauty in it?

AB: Absolutely. Beauty and health are connected. While much of the beauty industry hinges on illusion, being truly healthy is truly beautiful. Also, having the focus and intelligence to learn these movements is beautiful.

Many women fear becoming too "bulky". If women are interested in keeping their curves, is CrossFit a good workout?

AB: It is. I've kept my curves and I've seen so many women transform their bodies through CrossFit AND keep their curves. Proper diet and rest are also essential to maintain hormonal balance and curves.

CrossFit is structured around Workouts of the Day (WODs), many of which are named after women. The workouts are also internationally recognised, so do you think there is any possibility of adding a new WOD with a traditionally Indian name?

Kevin Prowse (KP): It's a definite possibility. It would give me options and inspire me with coordination and flexibility. I'm thinking kettlebells...Turkish getups. Actually, I might incorporate clubbells; they look like bowling pins and historically they're India's version of kettlebells.

The name "Durga" in Sanskrit means invincible. Think it could be a contender for a WOD naming?

KP: Definitely. DURGA! I love it.

How long do you see yourself doing CrossFit?

AB: It's a tool for general physical preparedness; it's so powerful that it can complement a lifestyle or be the base. I see (myself doing) CrossFit and beyond it. There might come a time when I just want to lift weights and not be on the clock.

KP: For life! As long as I'm healthy... It's so easy to scale and there are always ways to challenge yourself.



work it!

A Typical CrossFit Workout: "Barbara"

- 20 Pull-ups
- 30 Push-ups
- 40 Sit-ups
- 50 Squats

5 rounds for time. Go!

The writer doing a band-assisted pull-up



Cindy Lai

The skinny on kettlebells

If you aren't familiar with kettlebells, they're usually made of pure cast-iron and they are shaped like a cannonball with a handle — and although they are usually called Russian Kettlebells, India is, in fact, one of the premier manufacturers. Kettlebells, much like Indian Clubs or Clubbells, provide an ideal way to get a complete workout that builds muscle and burns fat...and there's something pretty satisfying about swinging an iron ball around too. It's serious work with serious results, but classes can also be a lot of fun.

Kettlebell exercises have a unique way of targeting a few of the key hard-to-train areas, including the dreaded "muffin top". One of the foundational movements in a kettlebell workout is called The Kettlebell Swing, which relies heavily on snapping hips forward to provide momentum for the "swing".

Cindy Lai, owner of Cindy Lai Fitness Boot Camp, tells us about kettlebell training, staying motivated and keeping a fresh look while at it.

If a personal trainer or guided class isn't available, is it sufficient for a kettlebell beginner to learn from videos?

Kettlebell training is a more advanced form of training, which is best when learned from a certified and experienced professional. You may be able to pick up some movements but an instructional DVD is not the best form of learning when using kettlebells for the first time. Many ballistic movements such as 'hip swings', 'cleans' and 'snatches' are much more complicated, as they involve explosive and powerful movements. As much as kettlebells prevent injury, you can incur injuries if your form is not correct.

You travel annually to Brazil to practice Capoeira. Would you consider a trip to India to teach kettlebells?

If the opportunity arises, I would be more than happy to consider a trip to India to teach kettlebells. When I'm passionate about something, I like to promote it enthusiastically and motivate people to participate for a better lifestyle.

People who take your classes often note that you are an enthusiastic and effective motivator (even sending out text messages reminding students to "eat well and hydrate" before class). Who or what motivates you? People motivate me. The fact that I can have a positive effect on someone's life and have the ability to improve someone's

lifestyle is very important to me. This is my passion, which drives me to do what I do today. So many people really don't take the time to breathe or relax. When I can motivate someone to take care of their health, it makes me feel like I accomplished something.

Busy schedules can make it tough to change outfits and look fresh between exercise and errands. Do you have any secrets on easy transitions from gym wear to stylish street wear when on the go?

Absolutely! My best recommendation is to select colours that are pretty basic and neutral, such as black or grey so you can pair them as an easy outfit. Also, I always have my hair up when I am training but I take it down afterwards for a fresh look. I like to carry a refreshing face spray such as the Caudalie Beauty Elixir containing extracts of grape and essential oils of rosemary, orange blossom and rose extracts. Another option is Evian's facial mist.

Hair can get messy when training "Cindy style". Do you have any tips for keeping a clean look while taking an intense kettlebell class?

Yes, the best thing would be to tie your hair back in a ponytail or in a bun. Also, if



Kettlebells

Lilia DeGregory

classes are outdoors, it's best to apply a sunshield so your hair doesn't get dry.

What changes do you notice in students who regularly attend your kettlebell classes?

They became fitter and leaner much more quickly. They love the feeling that they get after a good workout because they expended all the energy they possibly could into that session. It's such a taxing and intense class that you can't help but feel good and strong afterwards.

For more information about CrossFit, check out CrossFitOm, Mumbai's CrossFit affiliate or visit www.crossfit.com or www.crossfitnyc.com

To learn more about kettlebells and Cindy Lai, log on to www.cindylaifitness.com