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Tips on choosing a personal trainer

SEPT 2004

# club life®

making  
bodies  
FIT

yoga  
for  
every  
body

Stretch! De-stress!  
Grow Strong!

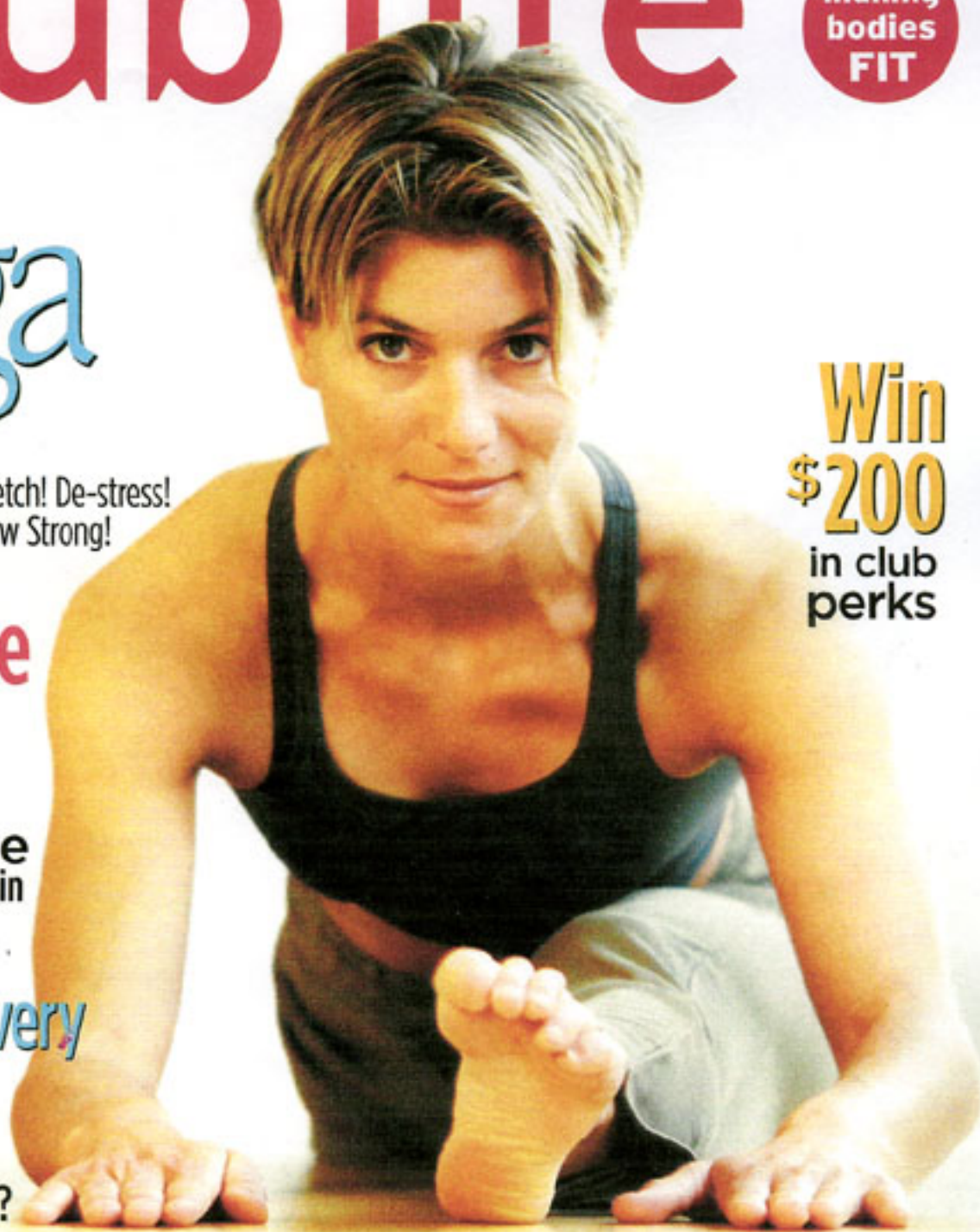
supersize  
your sets

3 step  
routine  
for your skin

Refuel for  
rapid recovery

quiz  
are you a jock?

Win  
\$200  
in club  
perks



## WHAT IT WORKS

Yoga is about more than just stretching, flexibility, and reducing tension. Yoga also builds muscular strength. Patty Maraldo, a certified fitness specialist and yoga and Pilates instructor on the faculty of Town Sports International, suggests trying one of her favorite yoga moves for building muscle: the Crow. It's called the Crow because it mimics the posture of a cawing crow. It builds strength in your upper body and arms as well as your core muscles. In addition, it's great for stretching out wrists to counter issues related to carpal tunnel syndrome, says Maraldo. The movement also helps expand your chest to increase your lung capacity—perfect if you want to improve your performance in most sports, including marathon running. And the balancing aspect of the movement helps you to focus and calm your mind.

## the crow

By Eric Neuhaus



Build muscle while balancing on your hands

# So much more . . .

than just twisting and turning, yoga strengthens the body and at the same time makes it more flexible. The Crow, like other yoga poses, improves balance and allows for the release of stress.



## HOW IT WORKS

In the arms, you'll be working your triceps, biceps, and the wrist extensors and flexors. For the shoulders, you'll feel it in your deltoids and rotator cuff, and in the upper torso, you're targeting the trapezius and latissimus dorsi. Finally, you'll be engaging all the core muscles of your abs.

## WORK IT

**Starting Position** Stand with your heels underneath your hips and your hips aligned with your shoulders. Squat down, pointing your knees slightly out and bringing your arms between your knees, and then place your hands on the floor. Your fingers should be spread apart like a starfish.

**The Movement** Bend your elbows to the side so that your upper arms become a "shelf" for your knees to rest on. Focus your eyes on a point on the floor in front of you, inhale, and lean forward slightly. Transfer your weight onto your hands while your knees are resting on your upper-arm shelf. Exhale and balance for 3 to 4 breaths. Slowly shift your weight back to your feet. Press through your legs while

using your core for support, and return to the standing position.

## WHEN TO WORK IT

Maraldo recommends doing the Crow movement once a day. She says the best time of day for doing this movement is the morning when you are more focused and your balance is better. Don't worry about repetitions: One a day is enough.

## WORK IT EASIER

If you do not have enough strength in your arms and upper body to transfer all your weight, simply lean forward, keeping your toes on the floor.

## WORK IT HARDER

If you want a real challenge, try this: the Sideways Crow. Rather than resting one knee on one arm, keep your legs together and rest both knees together on one upper-arm shelf. Hold for 10 to 20 seconds, breathing normally, and then repeat on the other side.

## WORK IT BETTER

- If you're having trouble finding the balancing point, raise your head a little.

- When you're just starting out, place a soft cushion on the floor in front of you to protect your head in case you fall.
- Try to let your hands take the weight of the balance rather than letting your knees weigh heavily on your upper arms.
- Always work within your own capacity, and don't move into pain. If you have arthritis or osteoporosis, this movement may be too much for you.

*Eric Neuhaus is a health and fitness writer and coauthor of The World's Fittest You: Four Weeks to Total Fitness (E. P. Dutton, 2004).*

## START



## FINISH

