

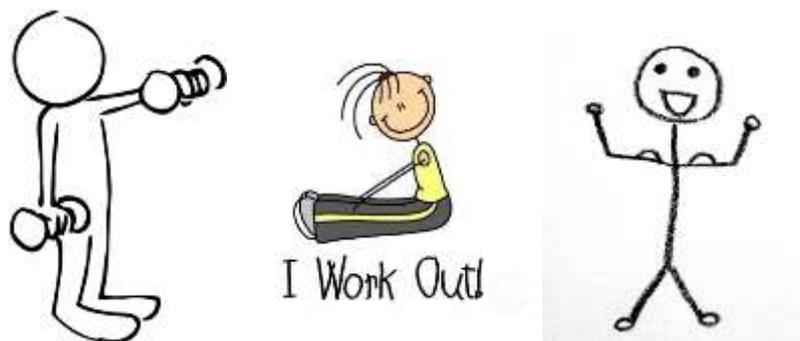
OPINION

HOW NOT TO BE A DOUCHEBAG @ THE FITNESS FACILITY

OR

“IF YOU WERE FEMALE, I WOULDN’T TALK TO YOU, BECAUSE YOU ALWAYS WEAR SWEATPANTS.”

September 28, 2021, by Lindsay Wincherauk



1

I’m tired all the time. It’s been several years between workouts. A stroke. Covid. A career gone. Some a-holes... never mind. They are what they are.

I want to survive. The life odometer rolls over to 61. I was fat. I walked and walked and walked and walked. I was no longer fat. I kept walking. I ate. A burger. Followed by a burger. Followed by a burger. I like KFC. And poutine! Walk. Eat. Walk.

Crap, not literally – the bloat is back. I must deflate it. Are you on the same journey – hopefully not the a-holes part?

Let’s change our movement. The gym?

Sure. I prefer calling it The Facility or The Asylum.

Come with me. Hit it. One more. You can do it. Shut up. We’re adults. Could you count for me? This set requires 10 reps. Most people who workout struggle with counting to 10. That’s why we need others to yell the numbers out or we would never, know, when to stop.

6...7... 8... 9... SHUT UP.

It’s great we’re moving. Living depends on it. Action always comes before motivation.

What’s that, a vein. I hadn’t seen a vein in months. Maybe years?

Another workout. *Hello, who are you?*

I’m Ego.

And over here... I’m Vanity. May we join you?

Do I have a choice?

No.

I appreciate your honesty.

You're welcome. Can, we, make, a suggestion? Yes. Okay, try this, go to the health food store, and buy some whey protein.



(Letting the World know you are working out)

When you are paying, ask the clerk, if the canister comes in a larger size, like a 5-gallon drum because you want to announce to the world you are working out!

I will. Why are you guys laughing?

I've managed to keep my Vanity + Ego in check. They are always present, but at 61, I've learned to suppress – a little. Unless I start having copious amounts of.... due to my new svelte physique.

You may call me Sveltely if you'd like.

You want to come to the Asylum with me? Great. Let's go. **Red Coat** will be there. As well as the **Annoying Talker**, the Erector, and Hot Legs. I may or may not share the origins of their monikers with you. Probably not. Depends on my stream of consciousness.

I do have several requests for you. Yes, several. It's great you are doing something so monumentally beneficial for living a long, healthy, laid-filled life. These requests are instrumental if you crave the *filled* part of the last sentence.

These requests will elevate you from meathead⁽¹⁾ working out person to a health quester with a lovable calming demeanor⁽²⁾.

Don't be a douchebag. Don't be a douchebag. Don't be a douchebag. Is douchebag an offensive term?

Yes.

Then why would you be one?

Here we go, to fend douchebaggery away, don't be or do any of the following.

1

ANNOYING TALKING GUY

The following are verbatim dialogue, overheard (and directly talked to), from the mouth of a 40ish year old 6' 3" - likely Neanderthal, who just needs to talk. He's sporting bright **ORANGE** kicks.

—

ORANGE SHOES approaches me.

I like your shoes.

Thanks.

I like the Swiss flag on the back.

Oh. There is a flag on my shoes? Nice. I like it. Do we need to keep talking?

—

I'm performing a set of something. His voice barges into me from behind.

Wow. Your arms are bigger than mine.

What?

Over here. Your arms, they're bigger than mine.

Okay.

Wow.

Am I supposed to say something now?

—

He's given up on me. He's walking beside another member.

Hey.

What?

Hey.

A confused look adorns the face of the other gym goer.

I saw you yesterday?

What?

Yeah, I saw you. At the corner of...

What?

—

A female gym goer walks by him.

Hey Bra. What's new?

—

He's standing by a captive gym employee.

She's hot. I'd fuck her.

—

And my favourite. I'm in the middle of a set of... Another member is doing a set on the other side of the same machine. **Orange Shoes** approaches him.

Hey.

Excuse me.

Hey.

Yes?

If you were a female, I wouldn't talk to you because you always wear sweatpants.

What?

Ten Minutes Pass

Hey.

What?

Do you want to see killer triceps?

What?

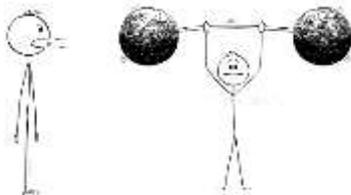
Orange Shoes flexes the back of his arms.

I have killer calves as well.

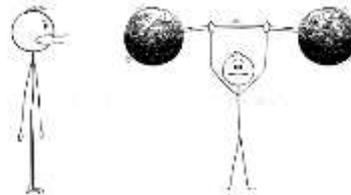
What?

I laughed and laughed and laughed and laughed and laughed.

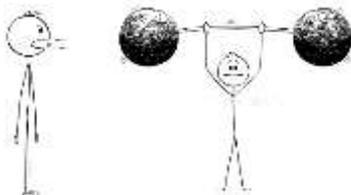
DO. NOT. BE. THAT. PERSON.



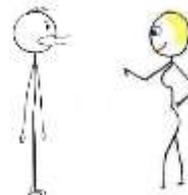
What you doin?
That looks heavy.



Would you like to see my baby toe?
I'm horny. Look at her.



Did you look?



Hey, Bra!

2

THE TREADMILL (CARDIO) INNOVATOR

I've only got five minutes to go. Jog. Jog. Sweat. Heart pounding. Life beaming.

Crap. The person next to me is running backward on the treadmill.

You are 40+ish fucking years old. What's wrong with you?

I want to **SCREAM**: WTF are you doing? Are you training to be a defensive back? Who told you what you are doing is a good idea – another gym idiot?

Maybe there is a benefit, but who bleeping cares? This will not get you laid. Maybe injured? You look like the moron you obviously are.

Three minutes to go.

Crap. Up hops a fitness enthusiast onto the treadmill on the other side of me.

WTF are you doing? Why are you side shuffling? Your at least 50. What's wrong with you?

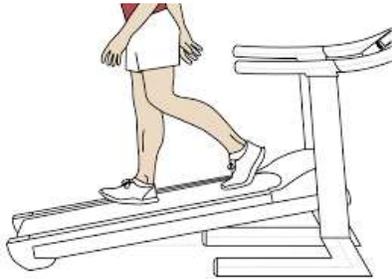
SCREAM IT. I EAT MY WORDS.

Two minutes to go. I hook my legs over the railing of the treadmill and start running on my hands.

That's, WTF I'm doing? I heard it works the idiocy part of the brain.

Don't worry, I'm wearing a helmet.

Damn it. It won't stay on. I should've got one with straps.



I'm bored of going forward.
My doc says this will make me—
—more desirable.



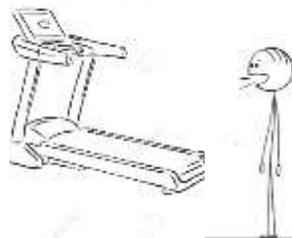
What's wrong with these people?
No, your doc did not.



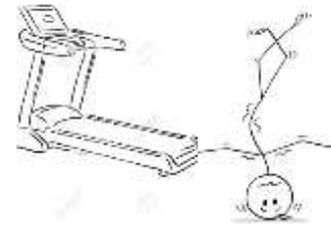
Look at me!!!
Sideways!
I'm working my...?



I give up.



I think I will join them



This seems like a good—
—idea!

ADDITIONAL TREADMILL DOUCHEBAGS

THE PHONE TALKER

We get it, you are important. I'm working out. Sweating. Feeling the burn. Somehow for the 45-minutes I'm on the treadmill – you're on the machine next to me having a loud conversation with someone on your phone. **LOUD.** You are not sweating.

SHUT UP.

—

THE PEP TALKER

Go. Go. Go. You got this. Hisssssssss. Hisssssssss... Go. Go. Almost. You can make it go... pant. Pant. Pant.

Who are you talking too? Oh. Yourself. Please. Just run. Walk. And –

SHUT UP.

—

THE ATTENTION SEEKER

You are a close relative with The Pep Talker. Every minute or so, you chant something. Then hisssssssss – finishing it off with a sip of water slamming your water bottle down so everyone in the gym hears you fucking working out.

If you are unfortunate to be next to The Attention Seeker the slamming water bottle may just be the thing that send you over the edge.

STOP IT.

Crap. You picked up a call on your earbuds. Everyone in the Asylum now knows you workout 4 days per week.

—

THE SINGER

Your voice sucks. You can't sing. And your selection of music is crap.

SHUT UP.

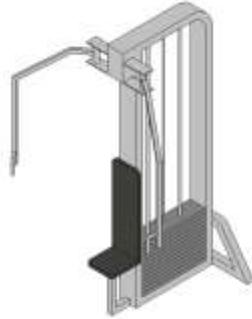
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3

UNIQUE MOVES TO HIT MUSCLES YOU'LL NEVER SEE

Similar to the treadmill innovators.

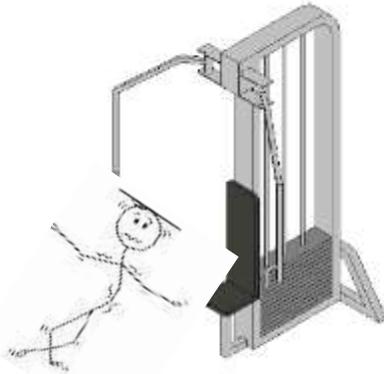
Hmm... this machine has strange design.



A seat. A back. They're probably thinking we are supposed to sit on the seat with our back against the back of the seat + then press the weights toward us.

They're wrong.

I heard the proper form is...



...I read somewhere if you press your ass cheek against the seat and angle your back to form a triangle between the seat and back + then press – fight through the back pain – this is excellent for...?

This looks fucking cool. Ouch. My. Back. The gains will far outweigh the pain! I'm a fucking monster. What's on my head? The floor?

Time to innovate the Bench Press. Feet raised above my head. Hands turned inside out. Press. Ouch. Fuck.

UNLESS. YOU. ARE. A. COMPETITIVE. ATHLETE. STOP IT (3).

YOU. ARE. BEING. A. DOUCHEBAG.

4

THE BOASTER

THE SETUP

Your 50. You are about to do a set of Bench Press. You're strong. You're killing it.

You throw 225 pounds on the bar (including the bar).

Could I grab a spot? Thanks.

6... 7... 8... 9... 10! *That was all you. Wow. Awesome. You're strong.*

I used to lift more. 315 pounds. I'm weak now.

I DON'T. CARE. NEVER. ASK. ME. TO. SPOT. YOU. AGAIN.

Why?

Must I spell it out?

Please.

Don't boast about your weightlifting accomplishments.

OUT ON THE STREET

Hey Tony, great to see you.

Likewise, Mark. What's new?

What a stupid question. Anyway, I can bench 325 lbs.

Can small talk get any smaller smaller?

LATER THAT NIGHT AT A COCKTAIL PARTY

Hey Melissa, great to see you. Oh. I saw Mark today.

Hey Tony, you saw Mark. How is he doing?

He can bench 325 lbs. And he was carrying the largest whey protein container I'd ever seen.

E. G. O. T. I. S. T. C. A. L D. O. U. C. H. E. B. A. G. S.

5

THE ADVISOR (UNSOLICITED)

We are well on our way to a healthy lifestyle. Our confidence is beaming. The Asylum is not so bad if you don't douche it up. We're working out for the right reasons. We are avoiding the gym mentality disease. We get in. Get out. Sweat. Do our best.

And then comes the advisor.

Hey.

Excuse me.

I've been watching you workout.

Okay.

Your form is wrong. Look, if you put your foot here, place your hands this way, you can hit the streptocraulius muscle giving it a real sheen and pump. This will take your workouts to the next level.

My what? Why are you talking to me? Did I ask you for help? Please, go away.

There are fitness professionals at the gym. They are called trainers. They are trained to give fitness advice. If you need help—get it from a professional trainer.

DO. NOT. LET. PEOPLE. THAT. OFFER. UNSOLICITED. ADVICE. ADVISE.

DO ASK?

Why would a douchebag I don't know, care, for even one second, about my workout?

Isn't it kind of creepy someone is watching you workout?

Run to get away from these douchebags. Not on the treadmill because they can stand right beside you. Actually, don't run. Just laugh.

And even if you know what you are doing and are the guilty stalker of others working out and have the urge to flex your knowledge. Here we go:

- Why the fuck are you giving others advice, what's in it for you?
- If someone asks for help with form, maybe help? Just maybe.
- The best help you can give, you Mensa member, is directing the person to this new thing with a wealth of information |**SARCASM ALERT**| called the INTERNET which has YOUTUBE. Tell them to GOOGLE how to |insert exercise here| or tell them to book a **personal trainer**.
- If you hire a trainer do not refer to them as "YOUR TRAINER" to anyone you fucking entitled douchebag. Who the bleep, are you? And while you're at it don't call people "My Doctor... my anything" —you sound like an idiot.

I don't even call my cat: MY CAT.

6

CELLPHONE DOUCHEBAGS

I'm a big proponent of NO CELLPHONES at the Asylum. Sort of.

First off, since I've been jonesing working out again, addicted to health, trying not to let it trip into delusional ego and vanity, I'm not really a BIG PROPONENT but more so a shrinking bloat-deflating-blossoming-flower.⁽⁴⁾

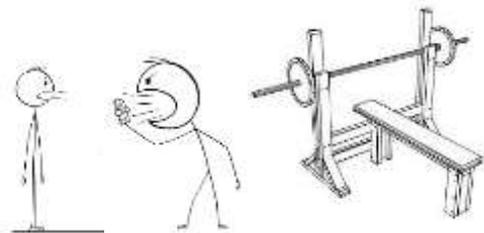
It is impossible to be 100% anti-cellphone because they are powerful tools – containing incredible apps to track our every move, keeping our new fitness addiction in check – allowing us to become incredibly interesting individuals with a wealth of meaningless fitness information to share with our friends – while we still have them.

I need my phone to sync with my watch or I won't be able to breathe.

But even with my OCD-ness, I hate the cellphone at the gym.

Seriously. Put them away. Yes, they may have fitness trackers on them. Great! But keep them in your fucking pockets. **You. Are. Not. That. Important.**

And besides, there are only a limited number of machines (benches), nothing is more irritating than waiting for a machine and seeing some douchebag scrolling his Social Media or Tinder or Grindr between fucking sets.



Excuse me, how many sets do you have left?

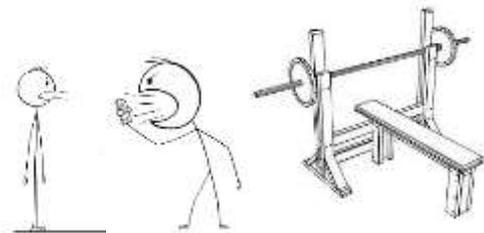
I'm super setting.

What?

Yeah. I'm hitting it hard. Feeling the burn.

Seriously, how many sets? It's a simple...

If you were a girl...



What?

Sweatpants. I'm pumping. Filling my veins.

Huh. You sound creepy.

I'm a mo-fo-ing monster.

I'm super setting chest + phone.

Never mind. I'll come back later.

7

WIPING DOWN MACHINES (ESPECIALLY DURING COVID)

1. Do it (it's great you are doing it).
2. If they gym provides wet wipes, and you wipe down the machine – it's not fucking wiped down if you leave it with wet streaks all over it. Gyms also have dry paper towel. **USE BOTH.**

11

8

PUTTING THE WEIGHTS AWAY

I'm OCDing hard.

I'm going to do bench. The presses rack has designated weight plate slots: 2.5. 5. 10. 25. 35. 45. They are laid out in perfect order. I'm going to be needing 2.5 lb plates today. Where do I find them? Probably on the 2.5 lb rack. No.

PUT THE FUCKING WEIGHTS IN THE RIGHT PLACE.

- Do it.
- Why?
- Because people who lift weights can at times be mentally stunted – and nothing illustrates your stunted-ness more than your inability to properly put weights away in their proper place.
- The 2.5-pound plate shouldn't be covered by a 45-pound plate shouldn't be covered by a 10-pound plate shouldn't be covered by a 35-pound plate shouldn't be covered by a 25-pound plate shouldn't be covered by a 45-pound plate shouldn't be covered by a... argh... what's wrong with you?

I don't mind, now. I can't do my sets unless my bench is organized. I'm being watched.

A 68-year-old-man approaches.

I've been watching you.

Okay.

It drives me crazy as well.

Okay. I can't help it. I must organize the weights. I don't expect anyone else to do the same. I used to be angry. It's now part of my workout, organizing the weights.

That's great. Just don't tell your doctor about this.

9

CAPTIVE AUDIENCE

GYM STAFF: TRAINERS + MANAGERS + SUPPORT STAFF

They're industry professionals. They are there to make each and every member's experience enjoyable. **NOT. JUST. YOURS.**

Like us, they are people too, at least most of them are. There was one... long story.

Like all people, occasionally, friendships form as rapport is built, but even then, respect the fact they are in their place of employment and since they are a captive audience, do not monopolize their time.

Stop. Talking to them about your shit. Use your brain.

And remember, you are at the gym for health + fitness. **NOBODY. FUCKING. CARES. HOW. MUCH. YOU. CAN. FUCKING. LIFT.** Or who you'd like to...? Ewe.

Seriously. Do you know why all the females (not) at the gym are wearing sweatpants, Bra?

AS FOR ME

The main reason I go to the gym is because Kitty Litter is heavy.

10

YOU'RE NOT PART OF THE MIRROR OR WE GET IT: YOU WANT TO DATE YOURSELF

13



THE SETUP

Douchee' is about to hit a set of dumbbell whatever's (?)

The dumbbells are lined up on a rack in front of the mirror.

Douchee' selects the 50 lb dumbbells. Smack dab in the middle of the rack.

He backs up 4" from the rack + starts blasting out his reps. Salivating.

Other Asylum goers are forced to walk around him maze-like to get to the weights they need.

Douchee' doesn't care. He doesn't back up. He doesn't clear a path.

Don't be a MIRROR Douchebag. Don't.

11

BONUS (SUPERSCRIPTS)

1. **meathead⁽¹⁾** – is a lazy descriptor. Most gym goers 99.372% are lovely people who are there primarily for health goals. It is the other .528% who fall into the ‘duh’ category of meathead. They are easily recognizable. Listen for the grunts.
2. **a health quester with a lovable calming demeanor⁽²⁾**. – Yes, I wrote lovable calming demeanor.
3. **UNLESS. YOU. ARE. A. COMPETITIVE. ATHLETE. STOP IT ⁽³⁾**. – Seriously, stop it.
4. **I’m not really a BIG PROPONENT but more so a shrinking bloot deflating blossoming flower.⁽⁴⁾** – Self Awareness is a good thing.

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BONUS: ORANGE SHOES



TREADMILLS IN THE FRONT – STAIR CLIMBERS BEHIND + A PATH BETWEEN

Three of each are occupied. Four of each are empty. Here comes **Orange Shoes**. He walks between the machines. When he reaches one end, he raises his right forefinger to his chin, ponders, turns, and walks to the other end of the machines. There, he raises his right forefinger to his chin, ponders, turns, and walks to the other end of the machines. There, he raises his right finger to his chin, turns and walks to the other end of the machines. He does this for 25-minutes, never getting on a machine. I put on my sweatpants. Wait, I’m not female, rats...

Gotta run, I heard the health food store got in a shipment of whey protein. 30-gallon drums.

6...7... 8... 9... **come on. One more!!!**

Fire me a message on the TALK PAGE of my website: www.lindsaywincherauk.com if you have more suggestions on making our world a better place!
