

you get fit fast

# gouples

By **KAREN IRIS TUCKER**  
Correspondent

**O**ut-of-shape physician David Boguslavsky hates to work out. His wife, on the other hand, is a personal trainer who owns her own Pilates studio. Could the unfit doctor get toned alongside the exercise pro without turning into reality-show fodder?

The Bravo TV cable channel found this too juicy a scenario to pass up, pitting Boguslavsky, of Premier Medical Acupuncture in Bridgewater, and his better half, Deborah Harris of Premier Pilates in Warren, against another similarly lopsided couple in an as yet un-aired program, "My Better Half," filmed last October.

"When I was done with that show," recalled Boguslavsky, "I said, 'I am so incredibly out of shape for being only 28 years old.'"

He credits the experience with fueling his desire to get fit. Despite the wide gap in

their fitness levels, he and Harris have been happy yoga and Pilates partners ever since, with Boguslavsky meeting his wife at her studio two to three times a week to exercise. The two also supplement that time with some interesting workout rituals at home.

"She makes me watch Oprah while she's on the elliptical and I'm riding my bike," Boguslavsky said.

He concedes there is some healthy competition between them, attributing it to "a guy thing. She's been doing yoga for three years and can do a split without giving it a second thought," Boguslavsky said. "And even though I've only been doing yoga for three months, it irks me that I can't get into a full split."

He said he recognizes that he'll never be as flexible as his wife, "but it doesn't mean I don't aspire to be."

Harris said exercise duos such as hus-

bands and wives, and even trios, are very common at her studio.

"We have a whole range of people working out together — co-workers, friends, a father and his two daughters, mother-daughter teams and spouses," she said. Harris attributes the popularity of "duets," as they are called in the fitness world when two people share a session with a personal trainer — to being a great motivator.

By way of example, she cites the experience of two regular workout buddies that rallied each other to successfully master "The Teaser" — an abdominal exercise requiring the ability to maintain balance on one's coxix bone.

"It's a very hard exercise because it has to be done with precision and, of course, you have to build up the strength to do it," Harris said. "Last week, one friend was really struggling with it and the other one said, 'you know, it took me three months to get it. Don't worry, you're doing fine.' So, you really have your very own cheerleader when you work out with a partner."

Marissa Miller, one of Harris' clients, said she has witnessed those benefits firsthand working out with her mother, Shelley.

"It's a support system," said Miller, 27, an insurance defense lawyer living in Morristown. "It's great being able to share in the exercises, the pain the next day, and how fit you feel, with somebody who's doing the same thing. We push each other," she said.

Her mom agreed.

"It was good for us to go and explore something new that neither of us knew anything about and have it become unique to us," said Shelley, 56, who owns Underground Irrigation with her husband.

Shelley, a Green Brook resident, views the 6 p.m. Wednesday night Pilates date with her daughter as the perfect segue to quality family time. "Afterward, we go to my house and have dinner with my husband."

A dancer and gymnast in her youth, Shelley says the instructors at the studio are im-

pressed by her flexibility. "And it's frustrating to Marissa when I can do certain exercises more easily. Yet her stomach muscles are much tighter than mine. So it's a little competitive but not overly so," she said.

Experts do offer some cautionary advice to working out as a pair.

"Listen to your body and don't necessarily feel you have to do what your friend is doing," said Kris Wade, owner of Personal Fitness Experts in Warren.

Wade, whose studio specializes in customizing fitness programs for busy professionals aged 35 to 55, said she has witnessed a troubling dynamic in exercise pairs where one person has a little more experience than the other.

"By default, the more knowledgeable person becomes the 'leader' but they don't necessarily know what's best for their partner," Wade said. "That's typically where injuries come into the picture. Everyone should follow their own body's needs and limitations."

She also advises against the "chit-chatting" that often sidetracks best friends who work out together. "It takes a pretty talented trainer to keep those couples focused," Wade said. "But as long as you keep them moving while they're talking, you're OK."

Dr. Adam Naylor, sports psychology coach and director of the Boston University Athletic Enhancement Center, echoes the view that socializing can disrupt the benefits of shared workout time.

"Make sure you pick someone with similar motivation and a similar ability level," said Dr. Naylor, adding, "If your workout partner is similar to you and you see him or her pushing through the pain and perhaps doing that extra exercise, you will believe you yourself can succeed at these activities."

Shelley couldn't agree more.

"Some Pilates exercises are so strenuous," she said, laughing, "that at the end of the session you want to high-five each other because you made it through."

