FRESH FITNESS FOR FALL

With cooler days and longer nights fast approaching, people will soon be heading indoors looking for fun, interesting ways to stay active and improve their fitness. Regular exercisers will also return to their fitness facilities as the weather turns, and although they may be veterans to fitness classes, they also want some new, energizing ways to keep fit over the fall and winter months.

So how do we keep our classes fresh? How do we attract new participants or entice the regulars into our facilities? We went straight to the source and asked some AFLCA leaders to share their ideas.

Fresh Ideas for Step Classes from Robin O’Grady, Group Exercise Leader

Don’t be shy to introduce new choreography! Try one or two moves at a time so you and your members aren’t overwhelmed. You can find new, creative ideas at local conferences or by attending other classes in your area.

Play with the orientation of your step. Try teaching a class with the step vertical instead of horizontal. Another fun way is to line the steps up in rows and choreograph so the members share each other’s steps.

Change your teaching position. If you are in a room with no stage try teaching on the opposite wall from your usual position, everyone (including you) will have to work hard mentally to adjust to this and that adds to the fun and challenge of your class. If you have a stage, move to the floor at intervals to motivate within the group.

Create a core-based class using choreography that requires controlled twists and balance. This is a great way to introduce standing core and educate your clients on the functionality of your core as a whole.

Play with the format (within your club’s allowances) of your classes. If it is a step/tone class, try teaching a combo and then a conditioning interval followed by another combo, and so on. Or teach all the cardio straight through and do the toning section at the end. If it is purely step, try adding cardio intervals or choreographed cardio intervals in between your combos.

Fresh Ideas for Portable Equipment Classes from Jessica Power Cyr, AFLCA Trainer

We often offer too much in our equipment-based classes and end up looking disorganized. Participants like to know what to expect and feel they had a challenging workout. How do you find that perfect balance? My belief is that less is more!

Follow these two steps to keep your portable equipment classes fresh!

Step 1: Set a monthly theme

- The monthly theme should be the workout.
- What is your goal for the workout?
- Do each exercise once in Set 1 until all the exercises are done and then start Set two.

Step 2: Choose a weekly modality

- Only choose one or two types of modalities per class, that is, the equipment
- Try to choose exercises that can easily be done on each piece of equipment.
- A squat standing on the BOSU Balance Trainer will feel significantly different than a wall squat with the BOSU Ballast Ball in your lower back.

Why it works

- Easy set up and clean up. Participants need only one or two items for class.
- They know what to expect for the whole month.

- They are set up for success.
- You look really organized!

Fresh Ideas for Cycle Classes from Lisa A. Workman, AFLCA Trainer, CSEP-CEP

Hire a DJ. Wouldn’t you love to have someone make you an indoor-cycling music mix? You might not be able to afford a DJ, but maybe your DJ is your teenager with his or her iPod. You might be surprised at what your class responds to music that’s different from what you’d normally choose!

Borrow something from another form of group exercise and incorporate it into your class. Consider using, for example, yoga class philosophy to focus your class. Inspirational quotes can be shared with participants at the beginning and end of class. Try a book like Zen and the Art of Happiness by Chris Prentiss for suitable quotes.

Change up the bike orientation. Consider setup such as pairs, small groups, or one large circle and put together some drills that work off the layout. Nothing beats the expression on participants’ faces when they walk into a studio to find the room completely different.

Share your knowledge of the training benefits of your planned workout. For example, over the course of several classes participants should expect decreased resting heart rate. Participants
Favourite Exercise: Hooping Anyone?

In our last AFLCA e-newsletter, we asked you to send in your favourite exercise. Amanda Syryda sent us the following great idea!

"Hoop dance, also know as hooping, is exercising with a handmade, adult hula hoop. It’s bigger in diameter and heavier than the regular kids’ store-bought hoops. Adults need a bigger hoop because our bodies are bigger than a child’s. The larger the diameter of the hoop the easier it is for a beginner hooper because the hoop moves more slowly around the body. While hooping all over the body, including the waist, arms, legs and chest, you get a cardiovascular workout, increase flexibility, balance, hand-eye coordination, and build muscle! Hoop dance definitely takes the work out of your workout, making getting fit FUN!"

- Amanda Syryda, AFLCA Group Exercise Fitness Instructor

Try mime. Marcel Marceau was one of the most famous mime artists of all time. Mimes are comical yet can be serious and are very entertaining. Challenge yourself not to speak and instead use mime. No need for makeup, just make up your own non-verbal cues and you will find your classes entertained while you save your voice!

Try some of these new, fresh ideas and see how your participants respond. Don’t be afraid to try something new in your classes—change is good, and fun! And full classes can mean lots of new faces, so who better to try out your new moves on?