

WEEKEND'S HOTLIST OF...

10 mad fitness fads

1 Anti-gravity boots The idea is that, as you bounce around on the springy base of these boots, you wobble yourself slim. The reality is you're probably burning up calories blushing at how silly you look.



2 Karaoke spinning While most of us might find it hard to draw breath during a spinning class, this one makes participants sing along to karaoke tracks as they work out.

3 Dumbbell phone Even a talkaholic couldn't pass off chatting on the phone as a workout until this invention came onto the market. It's essentially a dumbbell that hooks onto a phone handset (old-fashioned styles only), so you can tone as you talk.

4 WeSurf! This device brings the waves to your living room, allowing you to get a surfer body even if you've never put a toe in the sea. Stand on the mini board, switch it on, close your eyes and you can almost hear the surf – well, that's the idea, anyway.

5 Gospel groove Fitness is next to godliness as you sweat yourself svelte on a Sunday morning to the strains of a gospel choir. Moves include church classics such as hand clapping and arm waving.

6 iGallop You sit on a simulator that suggestively works out your bum, thighs and back just as if you were riding a real pony – might be good for your saddlebags.



7 Strippercise Fans of this risqué routine include Kate Hudson and Carmen Electra, whose fit bodies are a good advert for what is politely called sensual aerobic striptease.

8 Wind-relieving asana This oddball yoga move is designed to help you expel wind. Let's just hope the studio has ordered plenty of air freshener.

9 Laugh yourself into shape This weird craze from the US claims that by laughing maniacally as you lunge, squat and jump, you will firm up faster.

10 Weighted Hula Hooping The extreme version of a playground favourite, this promises to carve a waist from your curves in double-quick time – but it can cause muscle strains.

Ursula Hirschborn

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IT HAPPENED TO ME...

I won the lottery – and a new family

Christmas came early this year for housewife Susan Crossland, 44, when the mum of four won £1.2 million on the National Lottery in July. Susan now lives in a new four-bedroom house in Mirfield, West Yorkshire, with her husband, Michael, 39, who works in a farm shop, and their children, Samantha, 24, Jamie, 18, and 13-year-old Joshua. Another daughter, Rebecca, 25, lives nearby. Susan says:

This time last year, we spent the festive holidays in our old three-bedroom house. It was a perfectly nice family home, but we were running out of space as the children got older and, as Michael is the only breadwinner, we were only able to buy Christmas presents if we saved up all year. This time, however, we were able to be so much more generous with the children. We gave each of them £5,000 to spend on whatever they wanted, and treated them to little 'extras' such as mobile phones and computer games. I filled the house with trees and lights, and really went to town with the decorations – the children think I've gone a bit over the top, but then, I love this time of year; I always have.

I don't think I'll ever get used to having so much money. When I look at our bank statement showing more than a million pounds, it's surreal. I'm so lucky that I don't have to worry about money now.

I'd been playing the lottery since it began. I always had the same four lines, but never won anything. Then, in July 2006, my dad, Barry, died of cancer at the age of just 67. We were so close, and I miss him dreadfully. But, after his death, I took on his numbers – 6, 9, 13, 18, 29 and 30 – and continued to put them on every week. Around the first anniversary of his death, I noticed that I was coming across lots of white feathers in the house and garden. I didn't pay much attention at first, but then someone told me that some people believe white feathers are 'love tokens' from those people you have lost.

I thought it was nonsense but, a year later, just before the second anniversary of his death, I was in the garden and another white feather landed on my hair. It made me wonder if it was a sign, and I sensed something might be about to happen. That Saturday, I put Dad's numbers on as usual, but missed the live TV draw. Next morning, Michael and I got up early to check the numbers on Teletext. I knew immediately that we had won and started screaming, 'Get the children up'. I ran around the house and even into the garden in my pyjamas! The neighbours must have thought I was crazy.

I think I must have been in a daze for hours afterwards because I can't even remember what



Mother-of-four Susan longed for more children but felt it would never happen. Then she scooped a £1.2m jackpot

happened until I phoned Camelot that afternoon to check my numbers with them. When they confirmed the win and the amount, I went into an even deeper shock.

We went to pick up our winnings the following week. Everyone at Camelot toasted us with Champagne, but I can't drink it. I suffer from anaphylaxis – a life-threatening condition, which means certain foods, including Champagne, or medications can trigger an allergic reaction – so, as we picked up the cheque, I celebrated with a cup of tea.

From the start, I was determined the money wouldn't go to our heads. We're a very down-to-earth family and didn't want to come across as spoilt. We've never encountered any ill-feeling from friends or neighbours about the win, and I think that's partly down to the fact that we're not flashy – no one wants to see other people spending lots of money, especially in the current credit crunch. Our one indulgence was moving into our dream house. It has four bedrooms – our master bedroom has an ensuite bathroom – a large kitchen and a garden. Plus, it's in a lovely part of town. We've since converted the garage into a chill-out room for the children, where they watch television and play computer games. We've also been on a Caribbean cruise, and I'm planning to take Michael away for his 40th birthday next year.

He doesn't know where yet because I'm keeping it a surprise.

For me, the best thing about winning the lottery is the fact that we can now foster children. It's something Michael and I have wanted to do for years, but, until we won the lottery, we just didn't have the space. We've decorated the spare room and it's ready for a little one to move into – I think the best age would be anything from a baby to a five-year-old. I adore children and, as mine grow up, I can't think of anything better than to have youngsters in the house again. My children are nowhere near having any of their own – both the girls are too into their careers, Rebecca is a social worker and Samantha works in a nursery, and the boys are too young – so fostering a little one who needs our help will be wonderful.

We've applied to lots of agencies and we're just waiting for all the checks to be done by social services and to be approved for fostering. Hopefully, by spring, we'll be able to foster our first child, and I can't wait.

While some lottery winners might want to spend their money on flash cars or exotic all-year-round holidays, we're just not like that. Michael doesn't drive, so there are no BMWs or Porsches in the drive, and I still have the same Honda CR-V. Michael used to work in a dairy and he could give up work if he wanted, but he's very happy at a farm shop – he loves his job. If anything, he's worked hard-

er than ever in the run-up to Christmas, sometimes even seven days a week. He says he'd be bored sitting around the house all day.

I still buy my clothes from Primark and get the food from Netto supermarket. I can't even imagine going into a designer shop – I'd be too embarrassed. Even before the win, I hated receiving presents. I bought my mum a house five doors down the road from where we live, as she was living in rented accommodation and I wanted her to live in a nice part of town.

And, just before Christmas, I bought lots of toys and games and took them to a local school for disabled children. It has to be one of the best days of the year for me, and it really made me appreciate how much happiness you can bring to others when you have money.

The look on the children's faces as they unwrapped their presents was worth so much more than any amount of money. One of the boys was celebrating his 16th birthday and is a big fan of Kylie Minogue. I collect autographs and had one of Kylie's, so I gave it to him with one of her CDs. He was over the moon.

I sometimes wonder if Dad is looking down on us and smiling. It's such a shame that he isn't here to enjoy it, too – but it's thanks to him that we'll be able to make every Christmas special for lots of children from now on. ■

Jill Foster

THIS NEW YEAR 290 million expected number of text messages that will be sent on New Year's Eve
• 83 The percentage of Brits who will make a New Year's resolution • **£30.48** Average amount of money spent by Brits celebrating New Year • **50 per cent** of people who make a New Year's resolution will have failed by June • **15 million** Average number of bottles of Champagne consumed by British revellers on New Year's Eve