

# THE PERSONALIZED PUSH

## PUSH Functional Fitness

East Side - 924 N. Farwell 414.745.9901

### Erika Gudgeon

Owner/Personal Trainer

**Biggest fitness motivator:** The desire to live a long, energetic, adventurous life ... also when my favorite hot pair of jeans are feeling a bit snug and bikini weather approaches.

**Biggest fitness pet peeve:** That would be what I refer to as my 'drama clients.'

**On Milwaukee's recent fitness crunch:** Obesity epidemic and heart disease have prompted people to take their health into their own hands. Many individuals faced with these concerns are the same people who don't benefit from the traditional 'gym experience.'

When Erika Gudgeon's clients enter her fitness realm, they become part of her life, even outside the gym.

"If I have to take people to the grocery store, I will do that," says the owner and lead trainer of PUSH Functional Fitness. "When people come in here, I literally take them under my wing."

Inside her cozy, East Side fitness studio, Gudgeon and her team of two trainers call all the shots with their expanding list of personal training clients. And while the majority of them have turned out to be women since she opened her business two years ago, Gudgeon's principals of good health speak universally.

"I basically teach people how to work out in a healthy, safe, and effective way," she says. Simultaneously, her studio offers a private, focused atmosphere and one of the most unpretentious fitness experiences in the city.

"There are people out there who hate going to the gym or have had a negative experience," she says. "What can I do to show them they can get results and still keep it affordable for them?"

At PUSH, Gudgeon engages her clients with the typical circuit, cardio, and strength training — beyond that, she also works as a personal coach with clients interested in training for anything from triathlons to snowboarding or kayaking. Gudgeon drafts take-home packets with exercises and stretching techniques to do at home.

"There are never more than two clients being trained in PUSH at one time," she says.

Except during her weekend PUSH Bootcamps, that is.



Offered on Saturday mornings, Gudgeon's classes take participants through a series of strength and cardio stations in one hour. Sweat junkies are encouraged to bring their own play lists on their MP3 players for a more inclusionary experience in good health.

Gudgeon wasn't always focused on good health.

While she worked at a health club attending the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, much of her days were spent playing computer games at the front desk. When the former strength and conditioning coach for the Detroit Lions convinced her to (really) get in shape, her arm required a little twisting.

"I was like, 'No way, I'm too hung over' ... I totally wasn't up to working out."

But by 2000, Gudgeon realized her true passion by personally training clients at Bally's; five years later, she opened PUSH.

"What I'm seeing with my clients now — especially the 20- and 30-somethings — is they see reality shows like *Workout* and *The Biggest Loser*," Gudgeon says of the influx of clients joining her program. "Ninety percent of my clients watch these shows and want to look like that."

PUSH's slew of training goodies aids in the mission. Her studio includes Nordic Track, Star Trac, Core and Bosu balls, along with free weights and bands. And for those who prefer expanding beyond one-on-one training, PUSH hosts adventure outings, where clients meet for such high-impact activities as rock climbing, triathlon runs, and even ultimate Frisbee.

"People use us for a lot of reasons — whether it's to get in shape, maintain, or just get a kick in the butt throughout the week."

