

Is paying for a PT worth the money?



Natalie Morris

Wednesday 23 Jan 2019 11:49 am



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(Picture: Getty)

Staying fit is expensive.

There's the basic gym membership, the additional spinning classes at the weekends, the latest Lululemon gear – it all adds up.

So for many of us, the thought of also paying for a personal trainer can seem like a ridiculous luxury.

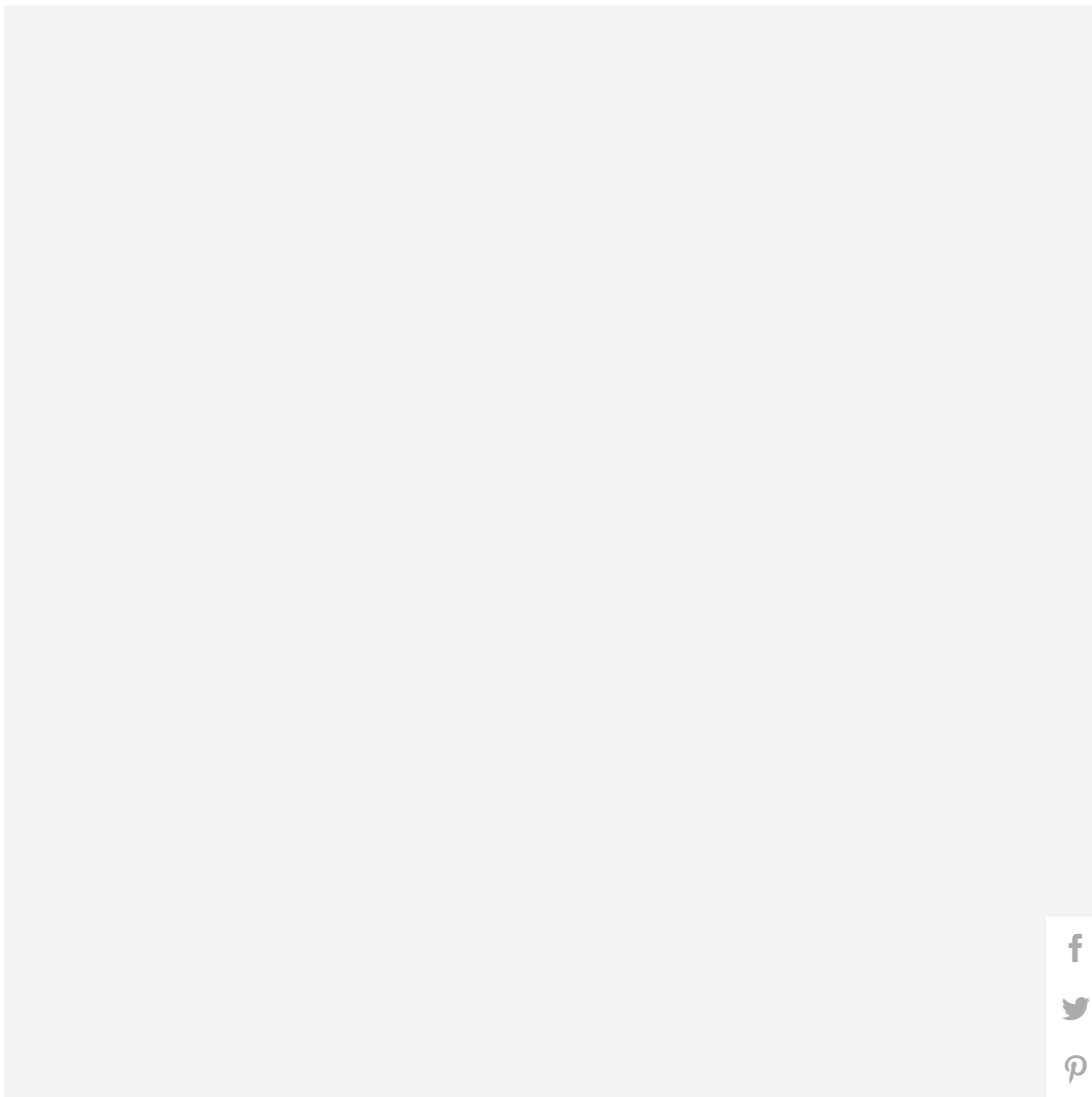
And for those of us who already know our way around a gym – can a PT really provide anything that you couldn't just do on your own?



But bespoke, tailored fitness certainly has its benefits. Our bodies are unique and optimal fitness is never a one-size-fits-all package – perhaps a personalised approach is the best way to get the most out of your workout.

But when the average price for a PT session in London is £50-£60 per hour (it's closer to £40 outside the capital), it's a decision that can't be made lightly.

We spoke to some experts and gym-goers to find out if it's really worth shelling out your hard-earned for a one-to-one session.



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If the gym has never been your thing, then paying for a PT makes sense.

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If you're terrified of dumbbells and can't work out how to turn the treadmill on, investing in someone to show the basics seems like a wise idea.

Aimee always had a complicated relationship with fitness. Not being naturally sporty, she found herself in a workout rut, but her personal trainer changed everything.

'I'm not exaggerating when I say my PT, Georgia, changed my life,' Aimee tells Metro.co.uk.

'For as long as I can remember, I have had a turbulent relationship with my body and it's ability to do sport. I've never been gifted in the sports department and, to be truthful, I was terrified that everyone would be laughing at the fat girl trying to do a burpee.

'My PT changed that. I started seeing her around two years ago after becoming increasingly bored of pounding miles away on the treadmill – and the shin splints and self-hatred that came

with it.

‘I told Georgia what I wanted to achieve – to feel good in my own skin and strong – and she taught me how to lift weights.

‘I see her once a month (at £48 per session) where she gives me a routine I can do alone three to four times a week.

‘In the sessions we concentrate on getting my technique right and trying new exercises – something I would never be able to do alone. She’s given me confidence to walk into a weights room and be happy in my skin.’

It’s a common misconception that personal trainers are nothing more than drill sergeants, barking at you to keep doing press ups until your arms turn to jelly and you want to throw up.

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But if you find a good PT, they can provide so much more.

Lewis Paris is a London-based **personal trainer** who’s philosophy incorporates a well-rounded approach to fitness. As well as the cardio and the weights, Lewis considers nutrition, rest and building good habits to be critical components for healthy living.

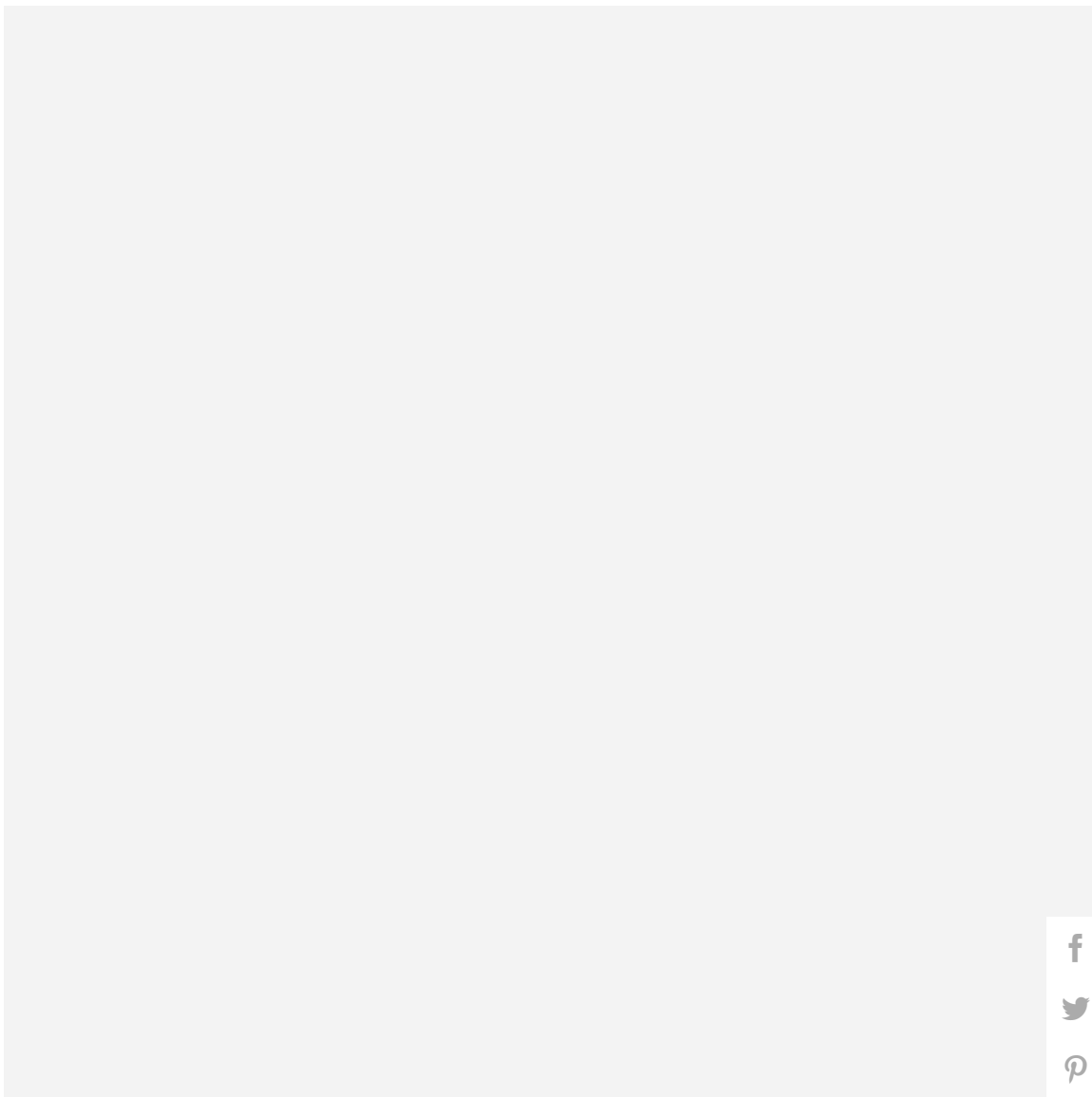
‘The general objective of a personal trainer is to be able to motivate and curate a tailored plan to suit the needs and goals of their client, this can be quite relative as no one person is the same,’ Lewis tells us.

‘I take the title personal trainer quite literally. “Personal” is the keyword, although it can be a lot to take on, in my opinion I believe it’s important to set basic touch points and standards with a comprehensive consultation so I can understand everything about the person I could be working with.

‘No matter the fitness level, a personal trainer will be able to find a person’s weaknesses and create an effective plan to strengthen them.

‘Beginners will have basic knowledge and will be coached to understand the importance of technique and nailing the fundamentals, which are carried throughout all exercises.

‘Seasoned gym-goers will need the extra motivation due to repetition of the same workout routine, lack of technique to ensure the effectiveness of the exercise or the common trap of plateauing.’



(Picture: Getty)

So what about these seasoned gym-goers? What do they really get out of it? If you're strong and fit, surely paying someone to tell you what you already know is a waste?

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Claudia doesn't agree. The super-fit sportswoman is incredibly active, but she says paying for a PT helped her to optimise her specific goals and fine-tune her training.

'I was training for fitness and weight-loss, so I was also put on a specific training program and diet that helped me achieve that,' Claudia tells Metro.co.uk.

'It helped break my training up into bite-sized goals and it kept my sessions interesting.

'I'm pretty self-motivated with the gym, but when I started to feel too tired or maybe getting ill, I know I'd have to justify myself to him. I didn't want to disappoint him and therefore had the hardest working six months of my gym life.'



How much should you be paying for a PT?

The average price for a PT session in London is **£50-£60 per hour**.

Outside of London the average price is **£40-50** – so keep these figures in mind when you are getting quotes.

It's important to look at what other benefits your PT may be offering – including personalised nutrition plans or movement analysis sessions.

At the very top end you can pay around **£150** for a single session. Obviously it depends on your budget, but it's worth shopping around.

Hattie agrees with this – she found working with a PT incredibly motivational, and, as a netballer, she finds it reassuring to have someone there who will reduce her risk of injury when working with weights.

'My PT is really just there for strength work and weights. With a personal trainer on board, I can make sure my sessions are incredibly targeted – so I can just work on leg strength if that's what I want,' she explains.

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'Although I know my way around a gym, I still find it much safer having a PT with me – they're there to catch the weights and perfect my form so I'm not going to do anything to injure myself.

'Because I play sport, I'm probably more concerned about injuring myself than the general public – so in some ways it's even more important for sportspeople to invest in this extra expertise.'

So how does it actually work? You can pay for a PT on a freelance basis, completely separate from a gym – and they will either train you in their own space or outdoors.

Or if you're already part of a gym, there are usually trainers you can pay for there. Normally, the cost for PT sessions isn't included in standard gym membership, and you will have to pay an extra fee on top.

For example, at **Pure Gym**, their personal trainers receive a fee directly from the client – as though they were freelance.

On their website it says; 'The cost for a personal training session varies from PT to PT. As a benchmark, a personal training session usually costs somewhere around £30-£65, and is 45 minutes to one hour long.

'PT prices in London are usually slightly higher, costing an average of £40-65 per session. This cost is separate to your membership and you would pay your PT directly.'

Lesley, a sports-lover and netball coach, says she actually saves money on gym membership by opting to use a PT instead.

'I've had the same PT for about 10 years,' explains Lesley.

'He comes to my house rain or shine, two or three times a week. And I do my sessions whether I'm in the mood or not. Sometimes I'm chatty, sometimes I can't talk at all.

'It saves me money on a gym membership because I actually do a purposeful hour of training. I do free weights (having invested in a squat rack over the years) – and with his help I actually get so much more done in an hour than I could in the gym.'



What are the benefits of a PT?

'Having a personal trainer on board will greatly increase the chances of someone reaching their goals within a specific time-frame, increase their knowledge of exercise and technique, provide routine, which encourages good habits, expert guidance and advice, prevent recurring or future injuries, improve lifestyle choices and install belief.

'Its very important to state the facts in regards to what will work effectively and what wont.

'Doing classes six times a week cannot be sustained long enough nor is it effective, quality over quantity should be the mindset!

'Yes it encourages a healthy lifestyle, yes you will see results, yes its time-efficient but it can lead to over-training (or under resting), injury, muscle imbalances plus workouts, which are not tailored or specific.

'Technique is very important and I emphasis this a lot within all of my sessions.

'When my clients develop the correct techniques it helps to enhance confidence and help them develop and advance their exercises quicker – which they may have previously felt was unattainable – that's the beauty of my job.'

Lewis Paris, personal trainer

It is a lot of money, but if fitness, strength and endurance is your goal – then it will likely be money well-spent.

That being said, it's really important to shop around and trial as many PT's as you can before signing up for anything long-term.

Personal trainers have wildly different styles, and they're not all going to be your cup of tea.

'These days I am skeptical about PTs, as some aren't in it for the right reasons,' Claudia tells us.

'I've had a few crap trainers who were talking absolute nonsense because they thought I wouldn't know any better.

'Or they didn't keep on top of my progress outside of the hour per week I trained with them.

'My time is precious, as is anyone's who works 8-8 during the week, and if I am paying a fortune to improve myself for an hour of my evenings, which I technically could do by myself, it had better be worth it!'

We couldn't really have said it any better.

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