

A photograph of a woman in a white long-sleeved shirt with 'WholyFit' printed on it, standing in a fitness studio with her arms raised. To her left, another person's arm in a purple shirt is also raised. The background is a brick wall. The title 'WholyFit' is overlaid in a large, white, cursive font at the bottom of the image.

WholyFit

Fitness coach offers all-inclusive workout

Story by Amanda Crum | Photos by Whitney Leggett

These days, experts say it is more important than ever to recharge, take care of the body and incorporate fitness into different areas of life beyond just the physical.

The term “mindfulness” is considered important when it comes to a mental health boost, and that is because more people than ever are realizing that staying plugged in — to social media and the news, to phones and other devices and to the Internet in general — can be detrimental to the way people feel.

Yet, many people don’t know how to get started making an adjustment.

Kym Pelfrey is determined to change that.

The 52-year-old Winchester resident said the faith-based WholyFit program came into her life when she was looking for a way to get fit that also lined up with her Christian beliefs.

She began doing some research online, discovered the company and, after noting there were no classes in Winchester, decided to bring WholyFit to the area herself.

Despite not having any previous experience with fitness training, she became a certified instructor in 2012 and began hosting classes in Winchester the following year.

Now, Kym said her goal — alongside her teaching partner and certified instructor Melody Wagner — is to help her students become healthier in all aspects of their lives.

“It does my heart so good to see women sharing and fellowshiping with one another,” Kym said. “There is no judgment in our classes and we encourage each other to grow and get stronger — physically, emotionally and spiritually.”

Based mostly in the U.S. and Canada, WholyFit was founded by certified exercise physiologist Laura Monica in 2012.

After suffering through a bout of chronic illness and depression, Laura knew she had to make some changes. With the support of her church and some physical exercise, she found what she was looking for.

Five years later, Laura has trained more than 500 fitness instructors through her courses, and the team continues to grow. In fact, Kym said she recently trained three instructors on her own who will be certified to teach in Lexington.

“We are growing in this area and it’s exciting,” Kym said.

Although her Winchester classes are held at Calvary





Christian Church, they are open to anyone and participation does not require prayer or anything a student isn't comfortable with. The point, Kym said, is to make everyone feel welcome.

"While we are God-focused, we never force anyone to repeat scripture or force anyone to pray," she said. "These are aspects of our classes that someone can either choose to participate in or not."

Because WholyFit shares a gym with the church, Kym is careful to respect and plan for everyone's needs. For big classes, she said the gym is perfect, but sometimes there are smaller groups.

For these, she heads upstairs to a more intimate space, where there are couches that beckon for a catch-up session before the workout begins.

Beyond this area, yoga mats are unfurled and waiting beneath glimmering strings of twinkle lights. Soft music plays, giving the entire place an air of relaxation.

There is conversation and lighthearted teasing creating a sense that the class is made up of women who

are related or close friends. This is one of Kym's goals: to have a fun and relaxed space that feels as comfortable as a family member's home.

Once Kym takes her place at the head of the class, a song begins to play, sweeping notes that cue both instructor and students when to move into which pose.

The workout is a cross between dance and yoga and was created with the distinct goal of pairing movements with emotions.

Laura said these exercises and breathing techniques are meant to provide both security and a way to feel adventurous, moving from one side of the body to the other for a balancing effect.

Mostly comprised of low-impact movements, any age group can enjoy a WholyFit workout without fear of injury; this is called Gentle Body Power and is meant to boost agility, balance and strength.

Another class, Aerobic Resistance Training, utilizes hand weights and focuses on cardio respiratory fitness and muscular strength. Afterward, it is all about letting

For more information about WholyFit, visit wholyfit.com. To learn about classes in Winchester, visit facebook.com/Winchester-WholyFit.

the students catch their breath.

"Every class ends with about 5 to 6 minutes of restoration," Kym explains. "Our muscles need time to restore after working out. The participants will experience calm and soothing music while the lights are lowered. Melody and I place a scented tissue — or unscented tissue if there is an issue with scents for any participant — over their eyes followed by a warm eye pillow. It's a peaceful time of calmness and rest for the mind as well as the body."

Kym and Melody offer classes in 8-week sessions and take a break from late October until January; this gives students time to relax during the holiday season and allows the instructors to work on new routines.

Determined to keep the cost low so everyone can participate, Kym said classes are \$30 per 8-week session for one class per week, and \$50 for two classes.

Unsure if you have time to commit to a session? Drop in for a class when you can and pay just \$5.

For now, the Winchester class is comprised solely of females, but Kym said WholyFit doesn't aim to leave men out.

"I am available and would love the opportunity to help men become certified to teach WholyFit or to help another woman become certified to teach a co-ed WholyFit class," Kym said.

As for those interested in becoming a trainer like Kym, she said to push the fear of the unknown away and give it a shot.

"I would tell them not to let fear get in their way or be a stumbling block for them," she said. "If I had not stepped out past my fear and insecurities, I would not be where I am today." §

