

[INTERVIEW]

BODY LANGUAGE

The *Journal* steps inside the world of A-list personal trainer Erik Meijer to talk body goals and how to get in the best possible shape for a wedding

BETHAN REES

“I started working out in the gym at the age of 17 and I was soon bitten by the bodybuilding bug,” Erik Meijer, personal trainer and one of only a handful of Dorian Yates High Intensity (HIT) Master Trainers worldwide, begins to tell me. “I was lucky to be able to learn from some legends such as Arnold Buurman (Mr Universe) in the Netherlands and six-time Mr Olympia Dorian Yates.” Erik worked his way up to be a professional personal trainer and has been helping people reach their ultimate body goals since 1997.

His client base ranges from the person next door to actors (such as *EastEnders* star Samantha Womack and *Harry Potter* actor Jon Campling) to professional athletes and of course this means his breadth of work is hugely diverse. “Most clients start out because they want to lose weight or sculpt certain areas of their bodies and when they reach their goals, many start moving the goal posts towards increasing their fitness even further,” he explains. “They start thinking of entering challenges such as marathons and often actors will come to me with a specific goal, such as getting more muscular for a specific film role in only a few months or even the opposite, getting very thin and lean in a healthy way.”

He focuses on High Intensity Training having tried a variety of training techniques himself and found that HIT works best for the overwhelming majority of his clients – he thinks it’s the most effective and also time valuable process. “If someone went to the gym five days a week for two hours over 40 years, this would mean they spent approximately two years of their life in

the gym,” he begins. “If they had used HIT the results would be even better and the time accumulated would be less than a year.”

Being a personal trainer is so much more than telling a client to do 20 squats and a 60 second plank – you travel on a journey of self-improvement with each person. “Seeing the faces of my clients when they are on their way to reach their goals is the best part of my job. Not only are they leaner and healthier but they almost always get a massive boost of confidence and the longer I work with them the more I see them smile,” he says.

Getting prepared for a wedding can be unduly stressful, but Erik doesn’t just help a bride or groom look and feel their best physically – he also works with other professionals such as make-up artists, tailors and hairdressers to

help plan their perfect day. Of course, the body is Erik’s area of expertise and the bride and/or groom needs to plan six to 12 months in advance. He’ll conduct an initial physical analysis including a fully body scan using medically-developed DEXA (dual energy X-ray absorptiometry) technology and create a bespoke programme for them. “The bride can even tell me what dress size she wants to be and I can tell her how long this will take within the margin of one week,” Erik elaborates.

You could describe Erik as a connoisseur of personal training and with more than 20 years of experience and his distinct lack of ‘commando’ style training, he will help your body goals come true. ♦

To contact Erik Meijer, call 07538 438 282 or visit erikmeijer.com



TOP: Erik Meijer; ABOVE: Erik and Hollywood star Brent Spiner