ISSUE 08
MARCH / APRIL 2019

HIGHER STATE

THE MAGAZINE FOR HIGH PERFORMERS

MIND OVER MATTER

Fitness pro, Miguel La Cruz, shows us that it's the power we hold within us that really counts in work and life

TECH vs EXERCISE

Our natural state has shifted with the rise of technology, so fitness is more alien to us than spending all day on social media

DOES HEALTHY EATING SUCK?

Our attitude towards food can make or break our ability to get results - it's time to reflect on how we look at healthy eating

REIN IN YOUR STRESS

Master your approach to stress management and sustainable high performance

Step up and own it!

I'm extremely passionate about the power of our minds and the impact our physical state has on our ability to bring our best selves to work.

That said, I am often deeply disappointed when people don't see the benefits of optimising themselves physically and mentally BEFORE trying to operate at full speed in the workplace.

If anything, we are in our bodies for our entire lives so it makes sense to respect our "homes" and make them as strong and secure as possible. A no-brainer, right?

Enjoy this edition of Higher State and, in particular, our interview with the inspirational Miguel La Cruz. His story is powerful and his sheer determination will fuel you to be your best self too.

Enjoy this edition!

Abi

HELPING TEAMS TO EXCEL

Edition 8, March / April 2019

Psychology + Physiology + Productivity

STRATEGIES TO REACH PEAK PERFORMANCE

Is your team focused, productive and getting results?

Are your people energised, forward-thinking and bringing their best selves to work?

Abi helps executives and teams to **build high performance habits** and achieve results with more focus, more energy and less stress.

Abi's unique **High Performance Formula** is a 360-degree system that enables teams to achieve top performance - addressing Business Productivity, Psychological and Physiological factors impacting long-term success.

Combining extensive business and coaching experience with skills as a fitness and nutrition professional, Abi can help you to take your team to the next level.

Speak to Abi about team training, executive performance coaching, consultancy and in-house programme development.

Abigail Ireland - Peak Performance Strategist
www.abigailireland.com
abi@abigailireland.com

WHAT'S IN STORE

04 Work with Abigail
05 Productivity: Tidy Up!
06 Mindset: Stress Less for Success
07 Fitness: Exercise - Love It or Hate It?
08 Nutrition: Does Healthy Eating Suck?
09 Spotlight on Miguel La Cruz

CLICK HERE for a Productivity 101 Masterclass

WORK WITH ABIGAIL

Ready to raise your team's performance, productivity, engagement and results?

Abi works with organisations to amplify team performance and productivity through workshops, coaching and strategic in-house programme development. She focuses on business productivity strategies whilst also incorporating psychological and physiological drivers of top performance (for example, mindset, attitude, exercise, nutrition and sleep).

Abi's corporate career led her to work internationally in private equity deal origination and acquisitions, banking, strategy and business management for over 13 years. She has also established her own businesses in the wellbeing and education fields, using her skills and experience as a Master Personal Trainer, Nutrition Coach and Pilates Instructor to bring a unique offering to clients that covers all angles.

Abi's 360-degree **High Performance Formula** can be applied to any team to boost productivity, energy, focus, engagement and quality results.

1 WORKSHOPS

- Practical, value-packed workshops that have an immediate impact on productivity and create a lasting, high-performance mindset
- Foundation level workshops focused on Business Productivity, Nutrition, Body and Mindset OR tailored staff/executive workshops that cater for specific business requirements
- **CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE**

2 COACHING

- Tailored coaching sessions for individuals and small groups, typically
- in the weeks and months following workshop sessions - designed to
- promote accountability and embed long-term performance habits
- Opportunity to tackle issues & roadblocks that sabotage
- performance
- **CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE**

3 STRATEGY

- In-house programmes and initiatives tailored to organisational and
- team requirements - research, analysis and strategy development
- Design and development of solutions to increase productivity, lift
- engagement, lift performance and achieve business objectives
- **CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE**

PRODUCTIVITY: Tidy Up!

Look around and clear that clutter

Marie Kondo released her book, *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up*, back in 2011. It took the world by storm and has now been followed up by the 2019 Netflix series, *Tidying Up with Marie Kondo*. Again, the excitement and simplicity of decluttering and creating space has gone viral - with families, couples and individuals around the world thanking their clothes before moving on.

Getting organised will see your productivity leap ten-fold. It's a nice feeling when you know where to look to find something, are on top of your admin and have clear physical space around you. If you're naturally chaotic in the way you work or live, that's fine. Being organised isn't about taking away spontaneity, impulsiveness or creativity. In fact, it frees you up to spend even more time on what you want.

The first step is to create a SIMPLE system you can use to file physical and electronic information - in a way that works for you. Sure, it will take a day or two to think about this and set it up, but then it's done for good! From there, you'll be amazed at how much brain space is freed up to focus on the things that really matter.

If you want to be more productive and achieve more in less time, register for the FREE 10 Day Productivity Challenge that kicks off every Monday. One quick & easy challenge each day for 10 days to help you get on track. Register here and set yourself up for success.

Abi has worked closely with and advised senior executives on strategic direction, business improvement, colleague engagement and effective leadership over the years. For help to raise your team's performance and productivity, send a message to ask@abigailireland.com.

MINDSET: Stress Less For Success

Not all stress is bad, but you need to keep it in check

In case you didn't know, 1 April has marked the start of Stress Awareness Month since its inception in 1992. These days, the word "*stress*" has so many negative connotations surrounding it - and, although *awareness* is most definitely increasing across organisations of all sizes, there still appears to be a lot of lip service around what leaders and companies will actually DO about it.

On one hand, it's great to acknowledge the signs of stress and be able to identify when employees are feeling the pressure. On the other hand, there is a conflict of interests as organisations still want to get results whilst keeping costs down - and this can sometimes come at the expense of employee wellbeing.

As we venture into 2019's Stress Awareness Month, consider whether you are a good role model for your people. What could you do differently or better to create and maintain healthy stress levels that drive performance rather than burnout in your teams?

If you work for someone, what do your stress levels look like right now? Do you need to adjust your circumstances so you can continue to perform at a high level on a sustainable basis?

If you're stuck on how to manage and channel stress effectively, get in touch about our online and face-to-face workshop session, "Managing Stress at Work" for you and your teams.

Mindset is just one aspect of high performance. If you want to be more productive and achieve more in less time, register for ***the FREE 10 Day Productivity Challenge that kicks off every Monday. One quick & easy challenge each day for 10 days to help you get on track.***

FITNESS: Exercise - love it or hate it?

Moving our bodies doesn't come naturally to us anymore

We live in a society where technology has slowly taken over physical activity as the "normal" way of living. On the whole, people spend much more time on their mobile phones and watching television than they do moving their bodies each day. Whilst digital pastimes are considered entirely acceptable, it's not uncommon to see people scoff at the idea that physical fitness can boost performance at work.

There is an abundance of research that supports the benefits of physical activity on creativity, focus, happiness and absenteeism, yet fitness is still an area that the majority of organisations consider a "nice to have" or of no importance at all. And yet, we don't need science to tell us that we perform better when we feel better. When we have aches, pains and low energy levels, it's highly unlikely that we are going to produce our best work, day in and day out. Of course, this can be done for a fixed period of time whilst we run on adrenaline to keep going but eventually this gets the better of us.

So, in the interest of sustainable high performance, consider whether your priorities are in order. Do you *really* not have any time or desire to look after your body, or are you going to wait until your body gives you a sign that it can't keep up? Remember, as we get older, our bodies aren't getting any younger. Combined with life and work pressures (more responsibilities at work, children, ageing parents, etc.), we are at risk of putting our bodies and minds under a huge amount of stress if we don't prioritise effectively. So, challenge yourself to make movement a priority - each and every day.

Abigail is a qualified Master Personal Trainer, Pilates Instructor and certified Precision Nutrition coach. She integrates Physiology into client performance strategies and workshops.
To learn how physical wellbeing impacts performance, email abi@abigailireland.com.

NUTRITION: Does Healthy Eating Suck?

We know what to do but we don't want to do it

One of the most common misconceptions about food is that healthy options don't taste good. Healthy eating is often associated with blandness and big bowls of salad, and people are often pressured into eating junk food by well-meaning peers who tell them not to be "boring".

Let's put this in perspective - in reality, how is the food you eat connected to your personality traits? If you want to excel at work and give your body and brain the fuel needed to perform, how is this anything but positive?

We all feel the pressure to conform and fit in, which is often why we make food choices that don't always support our bigger goals in life.

For example, we may have another beer or glass of wine for fear of being labelled as unsociable or boring. We just want to be accepted.

We may pick a huge steak and fries to celebrate a deal closing, because that's the done thing. Who would pick a salad or vegetarian option on a big occasion, right?

If this sounds like you, consider putting yourself and your goals first. Be the best you can be, and make this the priority.

For daily support with your fitness and nutrition goals, and to boost your mental and physical performance this year, check out the One Year Nutrition & Fitness Coaching Programme with Abigail Ireland here.

Make food choices that sharpen your mind. *Find out more about workshops, coaching and programmes for you and your team: abi@abigailireland.com.*

WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU GET KNOCKED DOWN?

The foundations of high performance are based on mindset - our minds make or break our approach to life, ability to succeed, ability to get back up again....

Miguel La Cruz is a stellar example of someone with an incredible mindset and determination to be at his best. Not only that, but his attitude to life and work is an inspiration to thousands of people across the globe. In this edition of Higher State, we learn more about Miguel and what drives his positive and proactive approach.

>> Visit Miguel's Instagram feed here <<

>> Visit Miguel's Facebook page here <<

>> Visit Miguel's website here <<

IT'S EASY TO "TALK THE TALK", IT'S A LOT HARDER TO "WALK THE WALK".

MIGUEL LA CRUZ

Miguel La Cruz is a Sydney-based personal trainer, calisthenics expert, amateur boxer and model. With an incredible following on and offline, Miguel has achieved influencer status and represented many industry-leading brands during his career.

Over the years, Miguel has trained with elite boxing trainers and fighters throughout Ireland, Cuba, Canada, the United States, United Kingdom, Australia and Angola. He is motivated by helping people to understand that health and fitness is a life long commitment.

Abi's Observation: *Miguel is an extremely high performing and inspiring individual. When reading his story on the following pages, you will get a clear sense of his humility and authenticity - the importance of hard work and determination whilst respecting others. Miguel's journey and successes over the years are a testament to his work ethic and positive approach to whatever life throws his way.*

Key Takeaway: High performing people don't just focus on themselves - the most inspiring and impressive people support others on their journeys too. With a positive attitude, an element of gratitude and a whole load of hard work, it's possible to do anything you put your mind to.

HERE'S MIGUEL

You're a successful fitness professional, boxer, calisthenics expert and model – tell us how you got to where you are today.

It all started back when I was kid - I've always been active and was involved mainly in football and boxing. Growing up in Ireland, they are some of the most popular sports, and it was great to be surrounded by your mates. I always looked forward to training as a kid and, in turn, was taught skills that I use to this day such as discipline, respect and keeping a positive and determined mindset.

I'm a big believer of introducing kids / teenagers to a sport or physical activity they enjoy and can be challenged in. For me, it helped build resilience and determination.

These skills keep me motivated to take chances and opportunities that push me out of my comfort zone. I enjoy training hard and striving to reach new goals, especially when you're setting an example to clients. It's easy to "Talk the Talk", it's a lot harder to "Walk the Walk".

Did you face any challenges over the years and, if so, how did you overcome these?

I mentioned I grew up in Dublin, Ireland. I came to Ireland as a child, having left Angola, which was in still in the grip of a 30-year civil war. My family made a huge sacrifice to give me a safer home, and unfortunately some of my family were unable to leave Angola.

That experience was and still is a challenge that I face today, but over the years I have been lucky to meet many inspiring and supportive people.

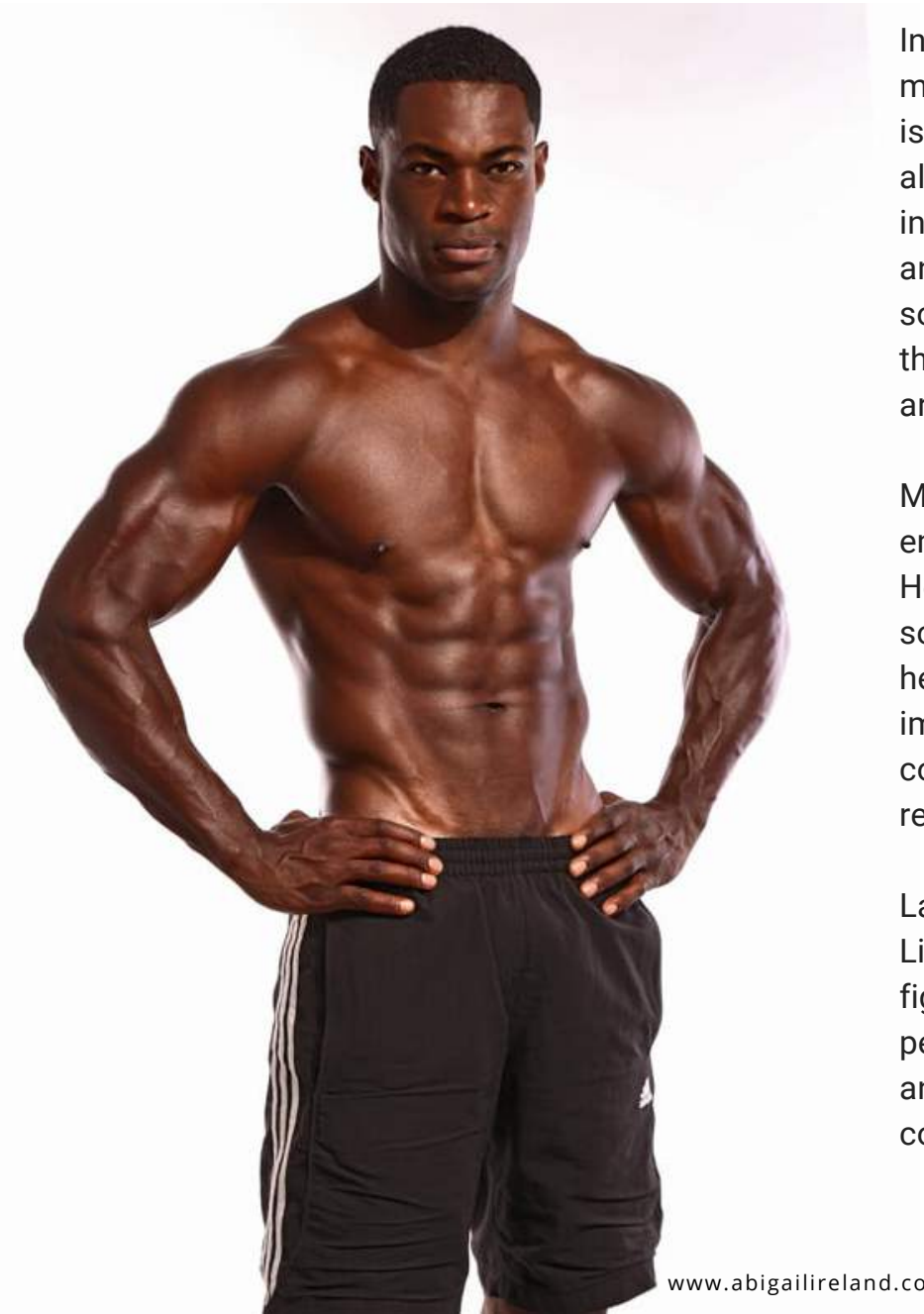
Life isn't easy and there are a lot of people in worse positions - many people are battling with challenges and issues that are worse than mine, and I understand the

importance of physical and mental health going hand in hand. I've witnessed many friends go through hard times with depression and, unfortunately, I have lost seven friends to suicide.

So, what helps me is remembering what my family sacrificed, and I use that as my strength to keep pushing.

Have you had mentors or coaches along the way?

My boxing coach Noel from Ireland - he's an extraordinary boxing trainer and works closely with the community, ensuring that kids who may be prone to stepping out of line with the wrong crowd or who are heading down a destructive path are offered support in the way of a sport. He created an environment that made me feel welcomed and accountable for my actions. He was tough but always taught me the importance of keeping healthy, respecting others and having self-belief.



In Sydney, I'm inspired by a gym member named Bernie. He's 93 and is in the gym four times a week. He always has time to talk with everyone in the gym, offering words of wisdom and encouragement. It's great to see someone who embodies the notion that age is just a number and there are no excuses.

My good friend and coach Antonio embodies the mindset of hard work. He will be 67 this year and he offers so much advice to me and everyone he works with. He has taught me the importance of stepping out of my comfort zone, and working hard to reach that next level.

Lastly, one of my biggest mentors is Lisa who is an important mother figure to me. One of the strongest people I know, she took me in as a kid and has loved and supported me continuously.

"...what helps me is remembering what my family sacrificed, and I use that as my strength to keep pushing." MIGUEL LA CRUZ

You have thousands of fans on Instagram, with whom you share your words of wisdom – what keeps you in such a strong state of mind?

Everyone can relate to someone else's hardship or challenges. I'm a realist and I don't tend to sugarcoat many things, so people appreciate advice that's coming from an authentic place.

Seeing people achieve their goals, or seeing people be inspired to take up a challenge they've been avoiding keeps me motivated to continue to train hard to empower others.

In your view, what are the top 3 qualities required for success in work and life?

Being dedicated, staying consistent and treating yourself and everyone with equal respect.

How do you recharge and re-energise yourself so you can be at your best on a consistent basis?

Training! It's my form of relaxation. I will always prefer to train outdoors, in the fresh air. Get my music on and I'm happy.

Also travelling - getting a different perspective and stepping out of the normal day-to-day routine for me is a great way to recharge.

In the corporate world, leaders can make or break a team. How do you lead and motivate your clients?

Leading by example. How can I expect someone to listen to advice I give them if I don't follow those same words. I live and breathe the advice I give - train hard, make no excuses, do your best and treat everyone with respect. I encourage everyone to

focus on their own self-belief and focus on a positive and proactive mindset.

Do you have a typical daily routine?

Usually I start the day with my own training before spending the remainder of the day teaching group fitness classes and training clients.

Who are your role models?

My boxing coaches Noel and Antonio. Got to shout out to Bernie who is still working hard at 93, and Lisa who is like a mum to me.

What's next for you in 2019?

I'm making plans to launch my YouTube channel - hopefully I can continue to inspire more people. Stay tuned....

"I live and breathe the advice I give - train hard, make no excuses, do your best and treat everyone with respect."

>> Visit Miguel's Instagram feed here <<

>> Visit Miguel's Facebook page here <<

>> Visit Miguel's website here <<

Get in touch to learn more about the superstars we feature in Higher State.

Know someone who lives and breathes high performance?
Send your thoughts and suggestions to abi@abigailireland.com.

"YOU MUST EXPECT FAILURE AS PART OF YOUR JOURNEY OF SUCCESS. FAILURE AND SUCCESS GO HAND IN HAND, YOU CANNOT HAVE ONE WITHOUT THE OTHER."

RICHARD PARKES CORDOCK

Thanks for reading Higher State! Look out for Issue 9 in May 2019.

What aspects of performance and productivity would you like to hear about next?

Send me your ideas so I can bring you even more quality content in the future.

In the meantime, stay productive!

Abi

abi@abigailireland.com
www.abigailireland.com

Follow me on: