

# Middletown woman makes exercise ‘joyful’ in fitness videos

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MIDDLETOWN >> Movement and exercise aren't just a blessing for Middletown resident **Natalie Spadaccino**, they're downright joyful.

Exercise science professor and 25-year fitness instructor Natalie Spadaccino of Middletown took out a loan and ran a successful GoFundMe campaign to support her Joyful Movement exercise videos.

Spadaccino, who this year released two fitness DVDs — **Joyful Movement Cardio** and **Joyful Movement Sculpt** — said many people view working out in terms of what they're incapable of

doing as opposed to what they can — something she hopes to remedy.

“Moving is a gift ... do it joyfully!” reads the tagline at the bottom of both her 30-minute videos, which Spadaccino says provide an aerobic workout that blends yoga, ballet and Pilates for all skill levels.

“For years and years, I've been trying to talk to all my classes about having a different mindset,” said Spadaccino, a group exercise instructor since 1989, an exercise physiologist at Connecticare, and an adjunct professor in exercise science at Central Connecticut State University.

“There's this trend in exercise of pushing yourself so hard and a lot of people can't do that.

“There's a lot more people out there who just need to get started and feel good about their exercise and say, ‘I can do this movement and feel good about it.’”

According to Spadaccino, positivity runs through her classes abundantly, because mental wellness is so important to physical fitness.

“It's not just for our heart, lungs, muscles or bones, but also for your mind. You can do a variety of things in your day, just do any number of things that make us feel good about our movement,” she said.

“Fitness is a personal thing and can get into a lot of personal issues, so I want them to feel I'm very approachable.”



Spadaccino is shown on the set of one of her two fitness DVDs which use “joyful movement” for cardio benefits and sculpting results. *courtesy MoveJoyfully.com*

Spadaccino said she has worked with many clients for over 20 years, and she teaches her classes and runs her DVD workouts as though she's helping extended family get in shape.

"Anyone I teach to, I love," she said.

A prominent theme in Spadaccino's fitness philosophy is her own Christianity, as both exercise and Jesus bring her joy, she said.

"It's important to have joy within yourself," she said, "especially because of what Jesus has done for me."

Spadaccino said producing DVDs has been a long-time dream of hers, but creating one is so expensive that she had only appeared in the background of her friends' videos until now.

It wasn't until January that she decided to "bite the bullet" and take out a loan.

"It's been phenomenal," she said. "Hundreds of videos have been sold, and I've sold 52 in my own classes alone."

She managed to recoup a bit of the DVD producing costs through a GoFundMe campaign begun in March.

"The cost alone for the copying and packaging of 2,000 dvds was \$2,350, that does not include the shipping costs that will be around \$400," she wrote in her crowd-funding appeal. By the time she closed her account, \$3,025 of \$5,000 had been raised.

"Even though this did not come close to funding all the money I spent making these videos, it sure was a huge help to me when I really needed it the most. ... this is a year when unexpected costs for car problems and house issues made it impossible for me to order my videos right now. I would have had to wait another couple of months to gather what I needed," she wrote to donors on GoFundMe.

Most of the reviewers on [TotalFitnessDVDs.com](http://TotalFitnessDVDs.com), which sells Spadaccino's videos, said they recognized her from her friend Ellen Barrett's videos.

"I first saw Natalie in many of my Ellen Barrett workouts and was excited to see her branch out on her own," wrote a reviewer from Plainville, Mass.

Spadaccino said [her Facebook page](#) has attracted interest from clients in Spain, Germany and Australia. She said her hope is that she can release "a couple of videos" every two years and share her workouts as a side business.

For information or to order videos, see [movejoyfully.com](http://movejoyfully.com).

