



A Lifestyle Guide to Health and Well-Being

Hilliard Studio Method

Fitness



If you've ever tried a new type of fitness, you know how intimidating it can be. Not necessarily the actual fitness class, but more likely the studio and the environment when you first arrive. It feels like everyone already knows one another and they all know exactly where to go and what to do. If you're lucky in a crowded NYC spinning class, *maybe* a teacher or nice neighbor will show you how to clip in your shoes or adjust your bike ;) I always thought this was just pretty standard and had gotten used to that scary feeling of being new, but then I went to Hilliard Studio Method (HSM) in Charlotte, NC and realized I was oh so wrong. It shouldn't be that way and HSM was the exact opposite.

I had been dying to try HSM in person for years. It's a favorite among everyone I know in Charlotte and I love doing their on-demand workouts, which you can stream at home through [Vimeo](#).

me to her studio. She told me a little about HSM and mentioned that she had just finished her first book that morning, *Be Powerful; Find Your Strength at Any Age*. I felt proud for her and almost like I was chatting with a good friend whom I had known for years.

When it was time for class, Clary led me front and center and got me all set up...I looked down at my three and eight pound weights and thought, "uh oh, I don't use eight pound weights!" The class was fast-paced and constantly changing, which made the hour literally fly by (always a good thing when it comes to working out). Clary's vibrant but warm energy kept me going and her constant motivational "shout-outs" (she literally knew every person's name) made me want to work harder. The class was unlike any I've ever done before.

The Method is a combination of everything I learned from exploring weight training, Pilates, barre, yoga, martial arts and athletic conditioning; it is a perfect balance between cardio and strength training, balance and flexibility, the mental challenge and the emotional release. -Liz Hilliard

Needless to say, this was not the "easy" beginner class I thought I had signed up for! Liz told me after that every class is designed to challenge you in different ways. It sure did challenge me and I can embarrassingly admit that I am still sore four days later! Those eight pound weights really got me! Luckily for all of us not in Charlotte, they have tons of videos on-demand and plan to start live streaming soon.

Make sure to read on for my "Light"ning Rounds with Liz and Clary and for the entire Hilliard Studio Method Interview. You can also [click here](#) for their famous HSM Smoothie Recipe, which they were so kind to share with LivLight.

"Light"ning Round – Liz Hilliard

I am...Liz Hilliard **and I am...**the creator and owner of Hilliard Studio Method and HSM | Core.

My alarm goes off at...6:30 am.

The first thing I do is...read the news on my phone and have a cup of Matcha tea.

My favorite products are...Tazorac gel for skincare, body oils like [Goe Oil](#) and La Mer products for moisturizing, and [St. Tropez Tanning Spray](#) for a natural looking glow.

For breakfast I eat...the [HSM Signature Smoothie](#) for a protein and nutrient-filled breakfast before a busy day of teaching and working out.

My uniform is...workout leggings and Golden Goose hightops with [HSM branded apparel](#) tops. I love my dragon (not a seahorse!) logo. It was originally my personal stationery logo and represents the feminine power of the workout and the strength of the spine.

Snack is...vegetables and hummus or nuts of any kind or whole fruit.

My version of self-care...is travel. There's nothing more freeing and inspiring than visiting a new place, changing my point of view and getting to see the world.

To drink...I love a Grey Goose dirty martini on occasion when 5 o'clock rolls around, but normally I stick with a good red wine.

My favorite dinner is...a fresh oily wild fish simply cooked with raw or roasted vegetables and quinoa. In Charlotte, we love to dine out at Stagionis, Barrington's, and Aix en Provence.

Of books, Netflix or Housewives I choose...books for sure! In fact, I just finished writing my first book, *Be Powerful; Find Your Strength at Any Age*. I'm really looking forward to getting back to reading other writers! *Belgravia* by Julian Fellowes is waiting on my nightstand. Sunday Funday is for going to the movies.

I am sleeping by...10:00 pm **after I...**check the news again.

"Light"ning Round – Clary Hilliard Gray

I am...Clary Hilliard Gray **and I am...**a mother of two young children, wife to a wonderful husband and a co-owner of two workout studios, Hilliard Studio Method and HSM | Core.

My alarm goes off...anytime between 6 and 7am (and my alarm is in the form of a 3 and 5 year old!)

The first thing I do is...check Instagram.

My favorite products are...good body oil, like [Goe Oil](#), and a sunless tanner like [St. Tropez](#).

For breakfast I eat...[HSM Signature Smoothie](#), two cups of green tea with lemon and lots of water!

My uniform is...workout wear, sunglasses, fun sneakers and a top knot!

My favorite activewear is...Lucas Hugh leggings, or Teeki if I want to feel like I'm wearing PJs, and tops from our [HSM collection](#).

Lunch is...sometimes just two big snacks on the go!

Snacks being...a kombucha and a Think Thin bar around 11am and a lentil and kale salad around 1pm

I am sleeping by...10pm, if not sooner, **after I...**tuck the kiddos in bed, take a shower, catch up on my book and check my messages and Instagram one last time!

Interview with Liz Hilliard and Clary Hilliard Gray, Hilliard Studio Method

For those readers unfamiliar with Hilliard, would you briefly explain the method and tell us about how it started?

LIZ: I created Hilliard Studio Method when Clary asked me to get her into the best shape of her life for her wedding in 2007. After doing research from coast to coast on every workout I could get my hands on, I developed a safe and effective method that combines different types of resistance training to produce results that are nothing short of a total mind-body transformation. Unique, proven and unparalleled, Hilliard Studio Method takes working out to the next level, utilizing signature floor and mat work combined with tools like weights, bands, gliders and core balls. Expect to get your heart pumping and your muscles burning while reaching your edge and defining your most powerful self!

How has Hilliard (and the fitness world) grown and changed since you first started?

CLARY: Specifically, we've grown from our first tiny rented studio offering four classes a week to our current flagship studio offering 45+ classes a week. The Hilliard Studio Method website hosts an archive of our weekly health tips, and we have a full selection of workout videos available on demand or on DVD. There are a lot more boutique and franchised workout studios in the market today than there were eight years ago when we started Hilliard Studio Method. We love seeing fitness and healthy living become more of a priority-a necessity versus a luxury. While competition can seem like a scary thing, we thrive on it and stay energized knowing we must constantly evolve and change over time. In fact, the workout changes daily so that you won't see your body or your mind plateau. While many workouts are specialized in one area, the beauty of our Method is that it is total-body and perfect for women of all ages and stages.

What sets Hilliard Studio Method apart from all the other workouts out there?

LIZ: Hilliard Studio Method is set apart because there is actually no other workout that is exactly like it! I developed The Method after cross-country research and experimentation on Clary and myself throughout its creation. The Method is a combination of everything I learned from exploring weight training, Pilates, barre, yoga, martial arts and athletic conditioning; it is a perfect balance between cardio and strength training, balance and flexibility, the mental challenge and the emotional release. That kind of efficiency is so important today as people's lifestyles and schedules become more full. As Clary mentioned above, you won't get the same workout twice, but the results will continue to show!

not local to make it to class, we have workout videos geared towards different stages including [Powerful Pregnancy](#) and [Hot Flash Hottie](#).

We love that Hilliard is available to everyone through DVD's and On Demand. Can people achieve the same results at home as they would in person?

They definitely can! While the in studio experience is something we'd love all of our clients to be able to experience, the physical and mental benefits of the workout can be found anywhere in the world. In fact, we are very close to launching a new online platform that will allow our clients anywhere to access our full library of workout videos and have easier access to health tips and the community that Liz and Clary have created in Charlotte. Stay tuned for more details!

How many classes per week do you recommend clients take and do you suggest incorporating other types of fitness?

We suggest that clients complete an HSM workout three to six days a week, depending on their goals and current fitness regimen. While we believe that HSM is the only total body workout you need, many of our clients have seen positive effects from The Method in other types of fitness including marathon running, golf, tennis, swimming and more.

Would you tell us about working as a mother/daughter team?

LIZ: Ever since Clary was a little girl, she has been my best friend; coming everywhere with me, even to modeling shoots and fashion shows. Working together now is a dream and I believe the strength of our relationship and our shared passion for joie de vivre is a big player in what has made Hilliard Studio Method so successful and every workday so much fun. In our relationship we both feel independent and are incredibly respectful of each other, leading us to bring our different strengths to the table and support each other in our weaknesses. I couldn't imagine going on this journey without her!