



WHAT GOES AROUND...

SoulCycle, Bridgehampton
264 Butter Ln., Bridgehampton
631-537-3630

SoulCycle, East Hampton
68 Newton Ln., East Hampton,
631-537-3630

FlyWheels, Sag Harbor
1 Bay St., Sag Harbor
631-899-4256

FlyWheels, East Hampton
65 Montauk Hwy., Suite C,
East Hampton, 631-329-8622



Instructor Stacey Griffith (LEFT), with Gillies, kicks some actress butt at SoulCycle.

SPIN CYCLE

For film and TV (*Law & Order: SVU*) actress and author *ISABEL GILLIES*, it's all about the bike.

There's a craze happening and I'm way into it, and so is Kelly Ripa.

It's spinning.

There are many reasons I drank this particular "Kool-Aid," but the first one is that if I spin, I don't have to run. I hate running—it's lonely, boring, and it hurts.

I'm not a runner. I'm a spinner.

I started when I was twentynothing, living in LA for pilot season. My memory of it is a bit hazy, but I do recall thinking, "Cool—I'm sweating my ass off but not running in misery on a road." But then 20 years flew by—careers, marriages, babies, even short-lived spinning obsessions at random gyms. Until one day when I least expected it (like love), an obsessed friend got me a reservation at SoulCycle on the Upper West Side, and I found myself clicked into a bike once more. And I was hooked.

Not that it's easy to get a bike in most of these classes. SoulCycle's online signup process is more anxiety-producing than shopping on Gilt Groupe. Plus, some people pay a premium to guarantee a ride (yuck); if you're late you don't get in; and it's expensive. It's kind of like

Studio 54 in 1984.

But it's *better*.

You know that perfect bite of a steak dinner, when you have a little nub of meat on your fork, and you swish it around in creamed spinach then shove some crispy fried onions on the end? Spinning is like that—the perfect combination.

First, there's the instructor. I'm devoted to one particularly positive, funny, wise, street-smart charisma bomb named Stacey Griffith; all I can say about Stacey is that she has that "something" that's changed my life. She's my gal. (And I still can't always get into her class!)

Next, there's the atmosphere. Is there anything nicer than candlelight—especially when you're in your forties? But what really gets me pumped is the rush: being, for most of an hour, in close proximity to a gang of sweaty, intense people all flying high on endorphins. It's humanity.

And, oh, the loud, throbbing, mood-altering, uplifting music! Think of a time when music's brought you up to the stars—listening to the car radio on a sunny day, dancing wildly at a college party at 2 a.m.... That's what it's like in the spinning room.

And topping it all off is the activity itself. Suddenly, during maybe the second song, when the movement combines with the music and the humanity and Stacey's positive messages, I suddenly take off from the pedestrian part of my life and blast into the heart-pounding, sweat-pouring, moving-like-I-just-don't-care part. I think about my family, my job, myself—the self I most want to be. I'm focused and turned on and pushing hard, and it's the most exhilarating feeling. Then, at the climax (yes, there's definitely a sexual element to it), Stacey usually imparts some wisdom—"You never know when you'll have to rely on your strength, it'll come when you least expect it"—and I burst into tears.

I'm addicted to spinning because it makes my life better. Stacey says (and if you knew how many times I start sentences with those two words!) that if you walk in the door, it's because you want to change something—your attitude, your self-esteem, the way you look in a tank top. And the truth is, if you stay in the room, get into it, and work hard, your life will change.

And what's more empowering than that? ●

KATHRYN HURINI