



## Chew on it

With Richard Chew  
Founder of Elixr Health Clubs

*This newsletter is dedicated in loving  
memory of Talena Chew, who's  
favourite colour is pink.*

### MY FAVOURITE DAUGHTER

It is with deep sorrow and pain to let you know that my beautiful daughter, Talena's life was taken from my family and me very recently.

At 8 years old in 1993 she was unfortunately kicked in the face by a horse. This left her with severe and long-term dental, neck, and shoulder injuries. The painkillers over the years became her comfort as she was always in pain. Her addiction to painkillers eventually stole her life.

I speak in the present tense about Talena because I know she is with us. Some of you had the pleasure of meeting my favourite daughter, and you would've seen how she just sparkles with life so easily bringing smiles and laughter to the people she touched. She is beautiful, feisty, bossy and oh so stubborn! Daddy's little girl...

I remember one time when she was little; she had a huge tantrum and wanted me to carry her into the house from the car. She crawled into the house crying "I can't walk! I can't walk!" Nonetheless, I didn't give in and let her carry on with her undignified crawl.

However, during a rough patch a few months ago, she became very intoxicated and called me to come and get her. I went to pick her up to take her home where I had to carry her from the car and into her bed. A few weeks after, she laughed at me and said she finally got me to carry her.

I was very lucky the evening before she was taken, as Talena and I went out for a lovely dinner (of course as we walked into the restaurant together, a table full of young men rapidly turned their heads towards my beautiful Talena as she walked past!). During our special time together she told me how much she loves me and how proud she is of me. I expressed the exact same sentiments to her.

Talena always said to me how amazed she was that I could always see the positive

elements during difficult times in life. But when her life was stolen from me, in my grief, I told her spirit that I just could not see any positive aspects to the tragedy of her death. But I know that in that period of raw and intense grief, I was feeling and speaking those words. There are indeed positive aspects that have come from our tragic loss.

This tragedy has brought my family and friends so much closer. We speak about things we would never usually speak about, and we connect on a level far deeper than before Talena's passing. Also, I can now feel how pure, real and generous the love my family and friends give me in so many ways.

Talena introduced me to a whole new level of pain and sorrow that I never knew existed. This situation has forced me to face my greatest fear. So I know now more than ever that when joy returns to my life in the future, it will be that much sweeter, as she has shown me the complete other end of the spectrum. My little girl is turning me into a stronger person.

Father Tony Doherty of St Mary Magdalene at Rose Bay was graciously hospitable in welcoming us into his place of worship to have our Talena's farewell ceremony.

At the ceremony I explained Talena's feistiness: Years ago, when I was coaching her Kincoppal School basketball team, during one game an opposition player charged into her deliberately to intimidate her. A few minutes later (she took her time to pick the right moment) I saw Talena send that player flying out of the basketball court and left her sprawled over the floor.

During that season, we made it to the finals, winning all our games. During the game, I heard this chanting coming from our team. So I asked Talena what her teammates were chanting. She said they are chanting; "Hail Mary full of grace, let us win at this place!" then adding "Well Daddy, you sent

me to a Catholic school!" We were playing another Catholic school and since my daughter's team had a heathen for a coach, we did not win.

I mentioned at the ceremony that I was really pleased most people were not wearing sunglasses at the farewell ceremony in an attempt to hide their emotions. After saying this I noticed more friends taking off their sunglasses. It was very touching...

We far too often project layers of shell around ourselves to family and friends, and we take for granted our dearly loved family and friends.

Talena, thank you for showing me the profoundly deep love I have for so many people and for teaching me to express it. Thank you for helping me peel away the layers of what I am not. And thank you for giving me, your father the heathen, the opportunity to preach in a church!

The "normal" family is a dysfunctional family, but learn to forgive each other, love each other and be kind, for our time with each other is so limited, and so unpredictable. My eldest son, Dennan, also a heathen like his Dad, shared with me a quote the other night he quite likes: "If you want to make God laugh, simply show him your plans..."

I am so grateful for my friends, and all the friends of Talena, Dennan, Dane and Debra who came to Talena's farewell last Saturday October 24th.

No words can take away the pain, but the many shoulders that have been offered for me to cry on have been comforting, and I can feel the kindness of friends sharing my grief.

The support and love from family and friends during this dreadfully difficult time is simply amazing. Thank you so very much.

In the loving and happy memory of my favourite daughter, Talena, please, when you next see your family and dear friends, hug them and tell them how much you love and care for them ...and more often.



# MEMBER BENEFITS

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## You may have seen their dancers in your class...now it's time to see them on the stage!

Elixir is proud to be the health club of choice for **The Australian Ballet** and **Sydney Dance Company**.

As an Elixir member you receive exclusive ticket offers to their performances.

Visit [elixr.com.au](http://elixr.com.au) for more information on these Exclusive member offers.

Photographer: Tim Richardson Dancers: Richard Cilli & Emily Amisano, Sydney Dance Company

Photographer: Jim McFarlane Dancers: Robyn Hendrick and Daniel Gaudiello, The Australian Ballet (Foreground)



# MEMBER PROFILE

# PILATES

## BEN BOLOT

In 2006, Ben Bolot joined his first Health Club, Elixir. At 34, Ben hadn't exercised since he was a teenager and was told by a Doctor that because of a lower back injury he would probably never be able to run again. Following surgery, it was essential for Ben to undertake rehabilitative exercises to avoid reinjuring his back and to remedy back pain. It was also essential for him to reduce his body weight in order to alleviate the pressure on his lower back.

Ben embarked on a 3-day-a-week training schedule with Elixir resident personal trainer, Karina Gavranic. Three months went by with less than satisfactory results as Ben made the common error of not following his program. He hadn't altered his diet and had failed to follow up with the prescribed exercises outside of his PT sessions.

Then the light bulb went on for Ben! He made the commitment to himself to cut out all junk food and seriously reduce his alcohol intake. He also made two additional trips to the club each week for training outside of his sessions with Karina. He focused heavily on cardio exercises to increase his heart rate and fat burning during training. He also began circuit style training and weight training in order to strengthen his entire body.

Ben's results have been amazing. He has lost an incredible 20 kilograms and has maintained his current weight for the past 2.5 years. He now only trains twice a week with Karina and, when he is not crazy-busy with work, he comes to the club to do his own training. Ben's back is now much stronger and he has significantly lowered his resting heart rate. In fact, he has been transformed with a stronger mind and a much leaner, more toned and conditioned body.

Ben defied his Doctor's initial prediction and often runs during his training sessions (never say never!). To this day, Ben continues to eat healthy foods and take part in regular training sessions. Rather than seeing it as 'diet and exercise', for Ben it is simply a better way of living!

## elixr Pilates

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For more details contact  
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