

NAWAZ MODI SINGHANIA has experienced the highs of fame, acclaim and motherhood. This Pilates expert tells **SUDESHNA CHATTERJEE** why she isn't just another industrialist wife



The perfect trainer: Nawaz at work

ONE THING you may not know about Nawaz Modi Singhanian is that she can handle her baby with great ease. Her body is that flexible and fast. "Motherhood," she explains makes you do more than one thing at any given time. I'm meeting with Nawaz for a formal chat, but with the relaxed energy she exudes, nothing can remain stiff and formal for long. She eases up instantly. I've seen Nawaz in many roles, as Mrs Gautam Singhanian, as a Pilates instructor, as a mother, and as a friend - all of which she executes with innocent modesty. Though she's the wife of Gautam Singhanian, Raymond Chairman and Managing Director, she does not have a chip on her shoulder, she's out there creating her own karma.

"Because, women need to have their own identity. Till now, Indian women have always believed in sacrificing themselves for others."

NOT A SOCIAL BUTTERFLY

Is she a social butterfly like other women, who like to flaunt themselves? "Socialites," she elaborates, "come in pretty packages with no substance. And I'm not like them. Even my husband respects me for who I am." And in the business of fitness, she's a known name. Almost everyone in Mumbai knows her, you don't have to say her name twice. A fitness freak, Nawaz, opened her first fitness centre, Body Art, in 1992 in Mumbai's plush Hughes Road locale. Her's is a family of lawyers, and her father and brothers were keen that she join the family profession. "But I wanted to do something of my own, I wanted to do something that was innovative. In those days, there weren't many gyms. So I converted the ground floor of my father's house into a fitness studio with the latest gadgets." And last November, she opened her second

fitness centre at Marine Drive. "I want every woman to be aware of her own fitness. Good health is my mantra in life. Physical and emotional well-being are crucial for everyone."

LADY OF SPIRIT

Nawaz is always on a roll. At 37, she takes a personal interest in everything she does. This means, she trains the instructors, goes through the accounts and keeps a tab on the latest in the world of fitness. She was the first to introduce Gyrotonics and Pilates in India. And not just Pilates exercises on a mat, she trains people with equipment - the Trapezius, Studio Reformer,

improving co-ordination and also increasing both internal and external strength. The Gyrotonics System is used in combination with Pilates at the centre. "We also have an anti-ageing programme, which lists a workout for every part of the face, which can stop ageing and also reverse the process," observes Nawaz.

THE AGONY AND ECSTASY OF BEING NAWAZ

Suddenly, Nawaz says, "Family is very important to me, I'm not an obsessively ambitious woman." And since daughter, Niharika's birth about a year ago

she keeps herself free for her child. Like the Raymond logo, The Complete Man, Nawaz is a complete woman. "Even Gautam works from home to spend some time with his daughter," adds Nawaz. "This year, we travelled together, and for the New Year, Gautam had a quiet year-end bash to ensure quality time with his family. Fatherhood has mellowed him."

We all have fears. Why was it a tough decision to become a mother? The usually guarded Nawaz suddenly gets teary-eyed. "When I was 11-years-old, my parents separated. I lived with my father and brothers. It was not easy because I was a pre-teen. I needed my mother at that time. I didn't have a mother-figure to guide me. I had grandparents and grand aunts but they belonged to a different generation. The separation took us by surprise considering they were such an ideal couple. One night it was over, just like that. However, I could only see silver lining and nothing else. Hence, I grew up as a very positive person. This is one of the many miracles in my life. Miracles do exist if you believe in them," says Nawaz. And yet her parent's separation did leave its mark on her young, impressionable mind. "In fact, Gautam had a very tough time convincing me to marry him." And she was similarly reluctant to become a mother, but then she decided to come out of her shadow. "I cannot live a paranoid life because of someone else's mistake. I have to live my life."

THE BALANCED HOMEMAKER

Rarely do you meet a wife who takes pride in her husband, not because he is a business tycoon but because he lets her be. Yes, in this commitment-phobic world, Gautam Singhanian luxuriates his wife with the warmth of security, "I never feel insecure." He's been her pillar of strength, her critic. What's been the recipe for this successful relationship? "We give each other space and time. We are also not judgemental about each other," says Nawaz. "I've had my share of adjustments - for example, dressing up 'appropriately' as the CMD's wife. But I like to do things for Gautam, it makes me happy, and it comes easy when you do it for someone you love," says Nawaz. "I also try to keep the romance in our relationship alive even today by making sure we have dinner together and celebrating special days. ■"

First lady of Fitness!

Allegeo Reformer, Combo Chair, Wunda Chair, Spinal Corrector and more. "The body becomes slimmer, firmer and more shapely, while one loses inches around the midsection and thighs. The hub also works wonders in rehabilitative processes (arthritis, knees, back etc.)," she says. "Gyrotonics (pronounced jy-ro-ton-ics) is a relatively new form of movement and body conditioning developed by Juliu Horvath, a Hungarian and a principal dancer in the world renowned Romanian State Opera. Borrowing from his background in gymnastics, swimming, yoga and dance, Juliu has created a series of undulating spiral and circular movements, which exercise the musculature while mobilising and articulating the joints," informs Nawaz. These movements, coupled with specific breathing patterns, release blockages and stimulate the nervous system while



Stylish and Spirited: Nawaz Modi Singhanian