Tessa Agnew is a 31 year old freelance copywriter and fitness blogger based in Brighton.

Tessa never used to exercise until seven years ago. She lifted her fear of weights when training for her second marathon in 2015.

Like lots of women, it was training with a Personal Trainer to combat injury which first introduced Tess to lifting weights. She now lifts consistently twice a week since and says “I’m the strongest I’ve ever been and I love it.”

To overcome uncomfortable feelings when approaching weight areas - which are often dominated by men - Tess recommends reaching out to ask.

“I think it’s a case of knowing what you’re doing to make you feel comfortable. Having a plan to follow and understanding how to safely execute the exercises.”

“That's why I train with a PT, to show me the correct form and different types of exercises, and show me what I’m really capable of."

If a Personal Trainer isn't for you, Tess believes ensuring a gym induction covers weights will help and suggests “building up from there and getting inspiration online from magazines etc”

Like many women Tess turns to influencers around her, including Team GB or Team England female weightlifters Zoe Smith, Emily Godley or Sarah Davies and their social media channels for the proof!

“You only have to look at social media to see lots of tiny women lifting heavy weights”.

For Tessa, lifting weights helps lift her spirits too.

"I'm the strongest I've ever been and I'm lifting heavier than I ever thought I was capable of. I'm loving getting to know the new, stronger me.“

“I love the fire in my belly that lasts long into my day after a good session. I’m more productive, focused and energised throughout the day too.”

For Tess, #StrongIsNotASize “completely embodies all that’s great about weightlifting. It’s something anyone can do regardless of their size, it's like a hidden superpower - you never know how strong someone really is until they show you!”