

When they won't come to you...switch to remote consulting

We need to see our clients live, but when we can't, "telemedicine" is the answer. IHCAN Award winner **CHARLENE HUTSEBAUT** shares what works for her.

Zoom, Skype or Facetime?

Early on in my work with clients online I chose to go with Zoom for several reasons.

Years ago, the quality of broadcast was higher than Skype. Not sure how they compare now.

I started with a free account and then upgraded so I could use it for group sessions over a certain number of people.

I like the record feature and use this with permission of my group clients to save the sessions and then post to our private Facebook groups so they can watch the replays.

Zoom now also has break-out rooms so you can get people doing collaborative sessions and then return to the main group.

There are so many great features including

chat box, sharing your screen, white board and more.

Did you invest in any special equipment?

I was given a great camera (Logitech – 1080p Webcam – currently £70 or so on Amazon) as a gift and really like it, but anyone with a laptop or phone can get started without spending extra cash, as most devices have built-in cameras.

Be aware that if you use your phone or iPad you may find your sessions interrupted or at least muted by incoming calls, messages or notifications. I have never used a special microphone. If quality is an issue at your client's end, using earbuds/earphones

does help to enhance their experience.

How do you "sell" it to clients who are used to clinic/gym consults?

In our current coronavirus situation this hasn't been difficult, in fact old clients I haven't seen for a while have come back to me looking to keep active again.

To help a client understand the benefits, you can share the importance of staying healthy during an uncertain time and how using video is very easy for both of you.

Continuing your sessions is great motivation while gyms are closed and helpful for those working on nutrition, as you can see them in their kitchen, offer cooking lessons and more. I am sure you will come up with your own ideas to serve your people.

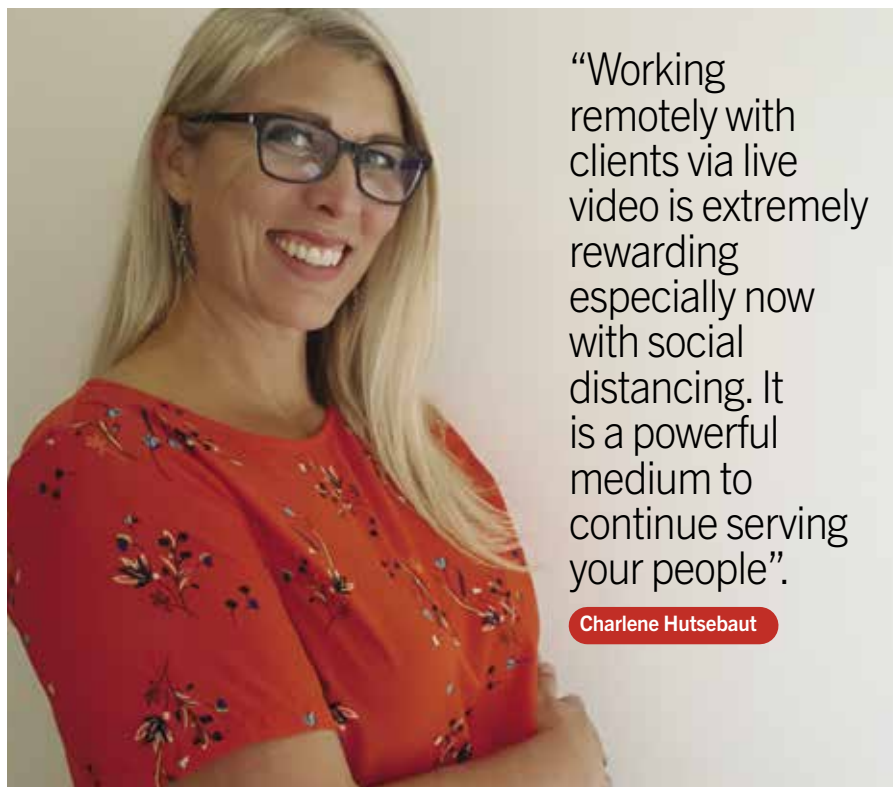
Many of my clients are enjoying our current video sessions because along with the workouts and wellness ideas they have company. Social interaction without physical contact is essential for our safety and theirs right now so remote video is perfect.

How do you prep them for an online session?

If it is a new client, you can send out your assessment form ahead of time and have them send it back before the session so you can prepare.

You may want to send instructions on how to get Zoom or other platforms onto their computers or phones, as some need a download to get rolling.

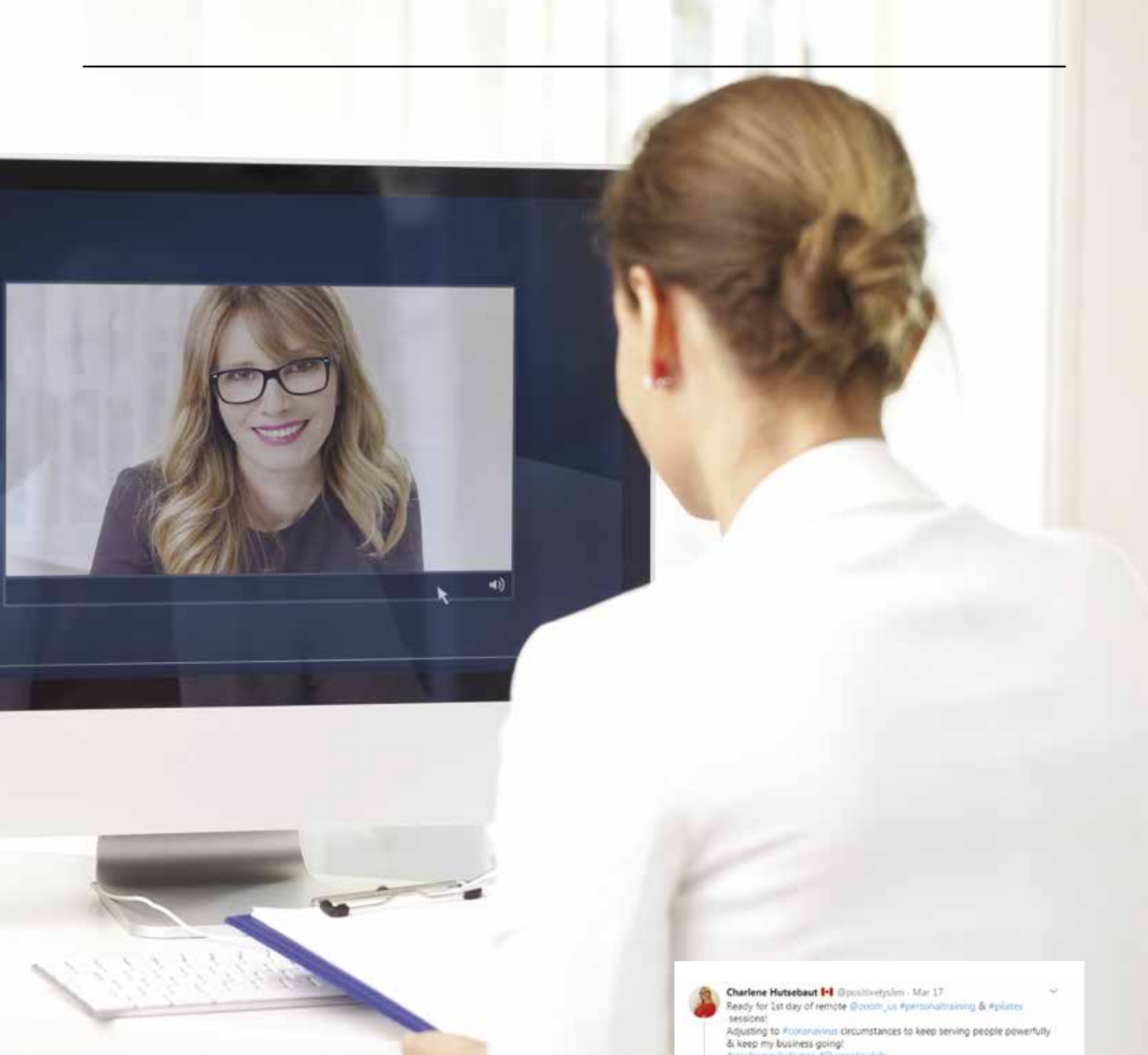
I let people know the structure of the session, how we may need to shift the camera around, ask them to be in a separate quiet room without distraction and turn their other devices off.



"Working remotely with clients via live video is extremely rewarding especially now with social distancing. It is a powerful medium to continue serving your people".

Charlene Hutsebaut





Also, you will want them to prepare their fitness or cooking equipment ahead of time, or if doing a consultation, have anything they need for note-taking.

Get strong wi-fi

One of my biggest tips is ensuring you have a strong wi-fi connection. You want this set-up to be as professional as your in-person work. If your wi-fi drops out halfway through or the sound or video quality is poor people can feel frustrated and so will you.

Lighting

Be sure to have lights facing you so your client can see you. Avoid having a window behind you or overhead lights that may shine directly at your client/camera. It is ok to ask the same of your client, as it is important that you see them.

“The Set”

Be in a room on your own and consider this your new consulting space. Limit background noise and distractions, as your client needs to hear what you are saying. I suggest no music unless you are doing a workout and the client enjoys this.

Try to have a clear, clean background. A bookshelf is fine if it is tidy. A plain background works well so there are no distractions for you or your client.

Getting your logo onto a poster or canvas is a great way to add branding and a professional look. Put it up behind you on a wall.

Practitioner preparation

Prepare yourself as you normally would for work. Shower and get dressed in your work clothes as though you are going out to your



→ normal venue. Surprisingly, when you work from home being fresh instills a confident readiness.

Ensure you are ready 10-15 minutes ahead of your session, just as you would be in person.

If using Zoom you will want to either set up a scheduled meeting and send log-in details to your client ahead of time (via email), or 15 minutes ahead of your session go live at your end and send the client the invitation. The latter does mean having your camera live until they join the meeting, so remember not to let anyone in your household walk by the camera in their pants!

Get your notes or programme ready, have pens or computer documents open; if doing an active session prepare your area with equipment and camera set-up.

As you can see, this preparation means it would be ideal to have at least 15-30 minutes between each scheduled client.

During the session

During the session do not, I repeat, do not have your phone or other device turned on. This is very distracting. You want all your attention on your client. Also, turn off your notifications on your computer or shut down your programmes such as emails etc.

Look at your client on the screen, not yourself. Try not to play with your hair or make repetitive adjustments to your person.

Start by asking if they can hear and see you.

Tell your client you may take some notes or be looking at their file on your computer so they know you are focusing on them even though your eyes may not be up on the screen.

It may take some time to get used to where your camera needs to be for your client and for you. If you are doing a consultation this is simple, you both sit in front of your cameras. If you are doing an active or cooking session you may need to move either of your cameras around to get best views.

Take your time with shifting the cameras; clients don't mind as they really want to see you and have you see them.

Take your time when speaking as sometimes there can be a delay to the broadcast. Wait for your client to stop speaking and then go ahead.

Ask your clients for views you need, especially in active sessions. For example, if someone is performing a squat, you can't walk around them like you would in person. I always ask them to do a certain amount of repetitions facing me and then some side-on. This way I can evaluate their form from all important viewpoints.

When teaching a movement, ask the client to sit or stand looking at the camera so they can watch you first, so they don't have to turn their head. After doing a set, ask if that worked for them or there were any ways it could be improved.

If you need to go off-camera let your client know why. This is very different to being in person – they can't see you!

To end the session

Ask your client how they enjoyed the session. Was there anything which could have worked better for them?

Ask your client if the same time next week works for them. Or use whatever interval you have set up with them. Each month, each day etc. This way you get into a rhythm of rebooking.

CHARLENE HUTSEBAUT, BPE, BEd, CSCS, is a corporate wellness expert, personal trainer, Pilates instructor and writer with more than 15,000 client hours and 26 years of experience in health and fitness practice. Charlene delivers online wellness, slimming and fitness programmes. She runs her personal training practice at the St Pancras Hotel, creates corporate health initiatives to engage employees, and is a sought-after inspirational speaker. She is a former IHCAN/CAM Award winner and in 2015 was the only UK woman to make the Top Ten Finalists in the Life Fitness Personal Trainers to Watch competition. She won a Mayor of London Volunteer Award for getting her community moving.

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Getting on Zoom

Online business advisor **JULIA CHANTERAY** spends a lot of time on Zoom.

She says: "Zoom is like Skype, so you can use it for talking to people online, running meetings, doing webinars and conference calls. They have roughly the same functionality, so if you've used Skype you can easily use Zoom, but there's one big difference. Zoom works. It works about a thousand times better than Skype. And if you want to have a call of more than just two people, Zoom works about a million times better than Skype".

She started off switching her coaching sessions for people outside of Brighton to Zoom. "The quality of the calls is much better – I never have to switch my video off to be able to hear my clients. I've interviewed people for my blog, recorded some videos of me talking to the camera, and run a weekly team meeting for a project with 12 people on Zoom. I use Zoom for the fortnightly workshops in my Remarkable Business programme, and I record our sessions and put them up on a members-only area of the website afterwards".

Among Julia's tips:

- Make sure people can see you. If you're sitting with a window behind you, the others will only see a silhouette of you.
- Do check your hair and appearance in a mirror before the call. I see a lot of people jump at the sight of themselves at the beginning of the call, and then start smoothing out their hair. No spot pushing, even if the other people haven't arrived yet.
- Remember to look at the camera sometimes, not just the screen. Looking at the camera makes for a more honest connection because then you are effectively looking into someone's eyes.
- When other people are talking, amplify your body language to give clear signals. You might shake your head or give a thumbs up. Or just remember to smile more. That tells people that you're engaged. You need to do a bit more of this on Zoom than if you were in the room for real.
- <https://zoom.us>.



JULIET CHANTERAY is a small business advisor, based in Brighton, but working with clients all over the UK, and internationally, as an online business advisor. She has been a business coach for more than a decade and has written dozens of ideas and how-to guides on her website www.theJoyofBusiness.co.uk. Some of these are in her Secrets of Business Success downloadable guide – sign up on her website to get this free. Juliet's Remarkable Business Programme is specifically designed to transform your business. It gives you everything you'd expect from a coaching session, but is worked through online, as a group.