

Here Comes the Sun!

Summer! 2010

Member, Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals

Moving Through Life

Finding the Pleasure in Exercise

Sonia Osorio

We're busier than ever with longer workdays, less leisure time, shorter lunch hours, longer commutes, and more demands than ever before. We may even be in a job that doesn't fulfill us, yet we spend most of our time there. When the day ends, we have almost no energy left to do what we enjoy. How to find a healthy balance?

Plenty has been written about the therapeutic benefits of exercise. So, why aren't more people reaping those benefits and moving toward health and well-being? We need to reexamine our notion of what exercise and movement are and consider what we're moving toward or away from. Then we can begin to ask ourselves other questions: Not

reoriented our point of view to notice where the opportunities lie? We can begin by simply redefining exercise (with its sometimes negative connotation of obligation) to movement. Already opportunities arise: How do we want to move in our bodies and in our lives? How can we have fun doing that? How can we move more (or maybe less, if we need to slow down)? How does it feel to be still? How can we make time to move into pleasure, to move with pleasure? Already, the notion of movement takes on a more healing expression. Rather than simply being another item on our to do list, it becomes a way for us to examine our lives, to see where we can move toward health, and use physical activity as a way to support this.



Pleasurable movement is motivating, connects you with your body, and comes in many forms.

just are we fit, but are we physically, emotionally, and spiritually healthy? Are we happy? Do we enjoy how we're moving through life? How can we integrate more healing movement into our days?

Exercise as "Medicine"

We sometimes see more barriers than options to exercise. But what if we

"When most people think of medicine, they visualize something material like a pill to be popped, a liquid to be swallowed, or an injection to be endured," writes Carol Krucoff, author of "Healing Moves: How to Cure, Relieve, and Prevent Common Ailments with Exercise" (Harmony Books, 2000).

Continued on page 2

Live in such a way that you would not be ashamed to sell your parrot to the town gossip.

-Will Rogers

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In this Issue

Moving Through Life
The Wonders of Water
Here Comes the Sun

Continued from page 1

"Some might also consider surgery, tests, or procedures ... [But] simple physical activity can have profound healing effects."

Krucoff, who cowrote the book with her husband, Mitchell, a Duke University cardiologist, advocates movement as preventive medicine, saying it's an ideal way to combat the increasing number of inactivity-related health conditions such as heart disease and obesity. This could actually be expanded to include stress-related conditions. In fact, it's often this combination of inactivity and increased stress that wreaks havoc on our immune system, endocrine system, and circulatory system. Every system in our body, in fact, responds to stress and inactivity. But, if this is true, then the inverse is also true: every system in our bodies will also respond to movement and pleasure. To make movement pleasurable and to use it as a way to reconnect with our bodies is, in many ways, the perfect antidote to the cycle of inactivity/hyperactivity and stress. As we move more in this way, we gain energy and health, we feel rejuvenated and relaxed, and we become more physically and emotionally aware.

Emotional Fitness

We often focus on physical fitness, but any movement toward health must also include emotional and spiritual fitness. Psychologist Nancy Mramor, PhD, author of "Spiritual Fitness" (Llewellyn Publications, 2004), ties emotional fitness with our physical health and with our heart's expression. "There is evidence that the largest number of heart attacks occurs on Monday morning between 8 and 9 a.m.," she says. "This occurrence is related to the experience called joyless striving. It applies to feelings of having to force yourself to go to a job that you have no interest in, or even truly dislike. Clearly these feelings suggest a lack of emotional fitness in the match between the employee and the job." When we're emotionally connected to our work in a healthy way and to one another, we not only survive, we thrive.

Personal Health

Interpersonal relationships, in fact, are one of the three major causes of life stress, along with environmental events/conditions and personal attitudes and beliefs. In his book, "Love and

Survival" (Harper Collins, 1998), renowned physician Dean Ornish, who first proved that heart disease was reversible through lifestyle changes, says that in order to survive, we need not only care for our lives, but the lives of others. Individuals with supportive relationships get sick less, heal faster, and live longer.

Our health and well-being are not about being hyper-active or inactive. They're about finding a balance, making our actions conscious, and learning to move in ways that are both healthy and appropriate in our own lives, then moving this healing energy out toward others. So, rather than exhausting or limiting our energy, we learn to expand it. Then we can begin exercising in a whole new way--exercising our right to choose and to better understand our body, our life, and what we want to be doing with it.

Begin by checking in with yourself as you're moving through your day: How does your body feel right now? How are you breathing? Where is this movement taking you? Do you feel good? Are you satisfied? Are you happy? If not, then change something. Change how you're moving, where you're moving toward, or look at what you're moving away from.

"Become the change you seek in the world," Mahatma Ghandi said. This isn't about a temporary quick fix to end a bad habit, lose some weight, or fill our time. This is about long-term change--making more conscious use of our time and of our life. It's about moving through life in healthy and healing ways, and expanding our idea of who we can be. Then our view of the world widens, our heart grows, our spirit soars, and our body moves toward true change. This is the healing power of movement.



Enjoyable exercise boosts physical health as well as emotional well being.

The Wonders of Water

For Skin Health and More

Shelley Burns, N.D.

Creams, nutritional supplements, treatments, lotions, and potions. We are always looking for the next miracle product to keep skin looking healthy and young. However, there is one essential, inexpensive, and often overlooked nutrient right at your fingertips: water.

Just as a car cannot function without oil, our bodies cannot function without water. After oxygen, H₂O is the most important component of the body, responsible for 65-70 percent of its composition. And of this, 80 percent is dedicated to the skin.

Water is the medium for various enzymatic and chemical reactions in the body. It moves nutrients, hormones, antibodies, and oxygen through the blood and lymphatic systems, and it also helps form the matrix of the skin. Devoid of water, the skin becomes dehydrated, resulting in a dry, dull tone.

It's likely that the moment a person feels thirsty, mild dehydration has already set

in. To keep the complexion looking smooth and blemish-free, drink water upon waking and continue drinking it throughout the day at one- to two-hour intervals. At least six 8-oz. glasses of water should be consumed daily and more if you are exercising, perspiring, and/or in hot weather. Ideally, intake should be between ten and twelve 8-oz. glasses of water a day. One note: Don't increase water intake all at once, as the kidneys and digestive system need time to adjust. Add one 8-oz. glass every day or every second day.

What counts toward your daily water intake? Just the basics: water and herbal tea. Caffeinated beverages and alcoholic drinks are diuretics that can contribute to dehydration, requiring even more hydration after drinking.

Not only is water important for skin health, it can also play a key role in the prevention of disease. Drinking eight glasses of water a day can decrease the risk of colon cancer, bladder cancer, and potentially even breast cancer.



Water helps keep the body at optimum health.

Here Comes the Sun

Updated UV Index Shines Light on Rays

A crucial warning system has been recently updated for your skin's protection. In compliance with the World Health Organization, the Environmental Protection Agency and the National Weather Service revamped the UV Index, a system created to alert people about the level of harmful ultraviolet (UV) light rays from the sun. Overexposure to UV rays can cause wrinkles and premature aging, skin cancer, cataracts, and immune system suppression.

Many factors influence the strength of UV rays: UV light is stronger in the summer, at higher altitudes, and in areas closer to the equator. It's also stronger at midday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., when the sun is directly overhead.

The new UV index ranges from 0-11 with guidelines as follows:

0-2: low.

Minimal exposure for the average person, but watch for reflected UV from snow and water.

3-5: moderate.

Stay in the shade during midday.

Cover-up outside.

6-7: high.

Wear a hat, sunglasses, and a sunscreen with a minimum sun protection factor (SPF) of 15. Avoid midday sun.

8-10: very high.

Take extra precautions, and avoid midday sun. Wear protective clothing.

11: extreme.

Take all precautions, seek shade, and avoid midday sun. If possible, stay indoors.

As part of its daily forecast, the National Weather Service publishes the UV index for each area of the country. Go to www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvindex.html and enter your zip code to find your UV index for the day. The Weather Channel, as well as most local TV stations, include the UV index in their weather forecast. It can also be found at www.weather.com.

For a detailed description of the UV index, or for more information on sun protection, visit www.epa.gov/sunwise.

*Life is
playfulness... We
need to play so
that we can
rediscover the
magic all
around us.*

-Flora Colao

I hope that you will find these articles informative as well as an enhancement to your health and well-being.

Enjoy the Summer!

Peace,
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