

## ***Out with the Old, In with the New ... thoughts toward exercise***

TAKE OFF POUNDS SENSIBLY

Today we're going to play a little word association using only one word. When I say that word, I want you to write down the first three words or statements that pop into your head. You will have fifteen seconds to write down these three words or statements. Ready? The word is "EXERCISE." Now get writing!

**Presenter:** Give all members fifteen seconds to write.

Next, we are going to stand up, one-by-one, and read our three words or statements aloud.

### **Get moving!**

Physical activity is part of maintaining a healthy lifestyle, no bones about it. Yet, do you ever find yourself saying I *have* to exercise or I *should* exercise? If we use words such as these, we immediately put a negative spin on exercise or approach it half-heartedly. Saying "I *have to*" makes exercise seem about as enjoyable as jury duty. And how can we build something into a lifestyle if we don't enjoy it?

It is absolutely essential to find activities we enjoy and can integrate into our lives consistently – and it's different for everyone. One person may see running on a treadmill as boring and tedious, while another may deem this to be the ultimate stress-reliever. Certain activities may not even seem like exercise to some because they're just plain fun. Think: dancing, Wii Fit, playing tag or Frisbee with the kids, etc. So, what's the best form of exercise for *you*? It's quite simple, really: the one you will actually do!

Over the next week, your goal is to do some type of exercise on at least three different days. It could be something tried and true – such as walking – or three different activities you've never tried. The idea is to find an activity or activities that you enjoy and can see yourself doing consistently.

**Presenter:** Take notice of the kinds of words members name. Do statements or words such as "no time," "dislike," or even "hate" come up? Generally speaking, are most of the words positive or negative? If you have a member or members who listed all negative words, volunteer that member or members to explain why. Likewise, if you have a member or members who listed all positive words, volunteer them to explain why.

Next, in an effort to start thinking about exercise in a different way, we are going to write down three phrases to counter any negative words or statements you may have written. For example:

**If you wrote:** "No time."

**You could write:** "I will *make* time for exercise."

**If you wrote:** "Don't like it."

**You could write:** "I will *find* at least one activity I do like."

**If you wrote:** "Don't feel like it."

**You could write:** "I will *feel* energized, strong, and healthy after exercising."

Repeat the positive phrases to yourself. We've said it before and we'll say it again – your mind believes what you tell it!

**Think about it:** Have you ever said, "Gee, I really wish I hadn't made time for exercise today?" Chances are, the answer is no. Remember, you'll never regret staying active.



***Repeat the positive phrases to yourself ...  
your mind believes what you tell it!***