

Exercise for a Better Life

In recent years many people have become increasingly aware of the need for physical fitness. Almost everywhere people turn, whether it is to a newsstand, television, or billboard, advice for maintaining and improving health bombards them. Although much of this advice is financially motivated by those eager to sell vitamins, natural foods, and weight-reducing gimmicks, some of it, especially that advocating a regular exercise program, merits serious attention. Such a program, if it consists of at least thirty minutes, three times a week, and if a person's physician approves it, provides numerous, healthful benefits. Everyone should exercise because it releases tension, improves appearance, and increases stamina.

The first of these benefits, the release of tension, is immediate. Tension builds in the body because of an over accumulation of adrenaline produced by stress, anxiety, or fear. Doctors agree that performing calisthenics or participating in an active sport such as tennis or volleyball for thirty minutes releases tension. If a person swims, jogs, or rides a bicycle for half that time, he or she should sleep better at night and have a better temperament the next day. In addition, after the release of tension, petty irritations and frustrations should be less troubling. For example, an employee upset by the day's work and by traffic congestion may go home and find himself arguing with the family and eating excessively. Taking about thirty minutes to release frustrations through physical exercise could help him or her to avoid this unpleasant behavior. In fact, the Mayo Clinic's research found that, "Physical activity stimulates various brain chemicals that may leave you feeling happier and more relaxed." Planned physical exercise, therefore, can eliminate, or at least ease, tension.

An improved appearance, another benefit of regular exercise, is not as immediately apparent as a better disposition but still a tremendous benefit of working out. Exercise takes perhaps a month or longer to show its results in a trimmer, firmer figure, but the wait is worth it! A person who is ten pounds overweight, for instance, may be able during this time to burn away most excess fat and tighten muscles, thereby reshaping the physique. Having improved muscle tone and even posture, he or she will wear clothes more attractively and comfortably. Continued exercise will maintain this svelte, toned figure for years to come. Combined with a sensible diet, an exercise program will also improve a person's skin tone. This improved appearance will boost confidence and increase self-esteem. Looking amazing and boosting self-confidence is a rewarding result of exercise.

In addition to the self-confidence gained by an improved appearance, increased physical strength produces the stamina needed to enjoy extra activities. A stronger, healthier body is obviously more capable of working and playing harder than a tense, weak one. A person who exercises should be able to complete a forty-hour week and still retain enough energy for bike riding, paddle boarding, playing basketball, or any other fun activity. Similarly, the student who goes to school, has extracurricular activities, and perhaps works part time should accomplish these tasks efficiently and without fatigue. Equally important, this stamina helps to ward off illnesses such as colds and influenza. Altogether, improved endurance is one of the most important benefits of a regular exercise program.

Despite all these practical reasons to exercise, some still don't do it! Critics of exercise often point out how exercise is time consuming, and many simply do not have the space in their day for it. This makes perfect sense in today's society because people are busier than ever before. However, exercise does not have to encompass a large portion of your day! Research suggests

that just twenty minutes a day of exercise can have remarkable effects on your health and wellbeing. While people do have pretty full schedules, most people should be able to find just twenty minutes a day to set aside for exercise. If not 20 minutes, research shows that even as little as ten minutes of exercise a day or 20 minutes three times a week is enough to radically improve your health. Additionally, a new exercise routine may even help eliminate a bad habit you do not want anymore -- like vegetating in front of the TV. While there are tiny obstacles to exercise, there are simple solutions around them with the positives clearly outweighing the negatives.

While not always easy, the rewards are fully worth the effort of an established exercise program that makes a person feel relaxed, look healthy, and have adequate strength for strenuous activities as well as routine tasks. There are lots of excuses, but you can always find a way to do the things you want and exercising should be one of them. So, get out there and start sweating!