

## **EXERCISE – Do I Really Need It?**

### *The second of Eight Treasures*

#### **The Story of Hulda Crook**

Mrs Hulda Crook was an American mountaineer, affectionately known as "Grandma Whitney". She successfully scaled 14,505-foot (4,421 m) Mount Whitney 23 times between the ages of 65 and 91 and had climbed 97 other peaks during this period. At the age of 91, she became the oldest woman to complete the ascent of Mt Fuji in Japan. She died in 1997 at the age of 101.

It was such a good story! But what people do not know is that She did not engage too much in physical activity until the age of 60! She mentioned in the magazine, "The Adventist Review:" "the more she moved the better she felt!

This story reminds us that there is no such thing as "too old" to engage in physical activity.

#### **Benefits of Exercise**

Studies have shown the many benefits of EXERCISE. Here are a few:

1. It enhances the immune system as the Natural Killer Cells' activity to fight the disease are improved.
2. Moderate exercise helps control blood sugar
3. Exercise lowers the "bad cholesterol" and improves the good cholesterol.
4. It makes the bone strong thereby prevent it from being porous and easily breakage (a condition called "Osteoporosis).
5. It promotes weight loss.
6. It improves mood and prevent depression through the "happy hormones" produced during exercise.

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends for adults 18 to 64 years old, should do at least 150–300 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity; or at least 75–150 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic physical activity; or an equivalent combination of moderate- and vigorous-intensity activity throughout the week.

#### **How To Start**

If you have decided to engage in a structured physical activity or exercise, the first thing to do is to consult with a Medical Health Practitioner and/or check if any of the following applies to you:

1. You have a heart condition or you've had a stroke, and your doctor recommended only medically supervised physical activity.
2. During or right after you exercise, you often have pains or pressure in the left or mid-chest area, left neck, shoulder or arm.
3. You've developed chest pain or discomfort within the last month.
4. You tend to lose consciousness or fall due to dizziness.
5. You feel extremely breathless after mild exertion.

6. Your doctor recommended you take medicine for your blood pressure, a heart condition or a stroke.

Secondly, Start slowly. For example:

- Use the stairs instead of elevator
- Play games with the kids
- Walk, don't ride
- Exercise to music
- Exercise at a level you can converse with a partner
- Join a fitness group or club
- Progress slowly and gradually

Thirdly, follow the F-I-T principle. Programs designed to improve physical fitness take into account **FREQUENCY** (how often), **INTENSITY** (how hard), and **TIME** (how long). The FIT Formula includes:

- F = frequency (days per week)
- I = intensity (how hard, e.g., easy, moderate, vigorous)
- T = time (amount for each session or day)

Please remember that there are three types of exercise. These are:

1. **Aerobic Exercise** – these are any activity with rhythm. Example: walking, swimming, dancing, walking on stairs, etc. This exercise is good for the heart and promotes well being and constitutes the most of the exercise time, at least 30 minutes.
2. **Flexibility** – Good for the joints and bones. This promotes balance, improves physical performance, decrease risk to injuries and increase blood flow to the muscle. May be done for 5-10 minutes.
3. **Strength or Muscle Building** – This prevents muscular atrophy (muscle wasting). It promotes stronger bones and joint flexibility. May be done for 5-10 minutes.

**Other important things to consider when exercising:**

- Get proper shoes and attire. You must be comfortable.
- Be consistent with your exercise regime.
- Get people to join you. It is good to exercise with company.
- Exercising outdoor has greater benefit.

If you are not exercising now, you may want to count the steps you take per day. The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends at least 10,000 steps per day!

As the famous Nike Shoe brand says: "Just do It!" It is never too late to exercise. Anytime is a good time!