



motion picture
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SOCIAL SERVICES CORNER

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THE POSITIVE SIDE EFFECTS OF PHYSICAL FITNESS

Question: My kids are always nagging me to work out, as best I can for my age (76). My weight is stable, so why should I exercise?

Answer: It's a common refrain that we hear in all generations: Move your body! First Lady Michelle Obama has made the fight against childhood obesity one of her national projects, midlife adults are bombarded with weight-loss programs and services, and older people are also encouraged to seek out physical activity that helps with circulation and balance.

But if none of these reasons motivate you to move, consider this: exercising your body is a key component to keeping your brain healthy as you age. A new study at the University of Edinburgh published in the journal *Neurology* found that both the volume and health of brain matter in people over age 70 are improved with exercise. That may mean better memory and less "mental decline."

So what counts as exercise, exactly? According to the Scottish researchers it could be a short walk, working in the garden or cleaning the house. You might also decide to work with a personal trainer

who specializes in older adults. Lori Michiel of Fifty Plus Fitness in Los Angeles says to begin with easy stretches to loosen up your joints and muscles. Walking is also an easy starting point. Add 10 minutes a day to your usual routine. Remain mindful of your step and balance.

Your brain is not the only part of you that suffers from lack of physical exercise. Michiel adds, "With every decade of life past our mid 30s, we lose 1.5% of our muscle strength. If you are not moving your body regularly your muscles will become flabby and weak, your heart and lungs won't function efficiently, and your joints will be stiff and easily injured. Inactivity is as much of a health risk as smoking!"

It gives new meaning to the expression "What have you got to lose?"

Sources: "Neuroprotective Lifestyles and the Aging Brain: Activity, Atrophy, and White Matter Integrity," www.neurology.org. *American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM)* "Position Stand: Exercise and Physical Activity for Older Adults." 1998; 30(6):992-1007.

You can find many articles on senior fitness at www.fiftyplusfitness.biz.

JOKE OF THE MONTH

**"Somebody stole my wife's credit card."
"That's terrible."
"Not really. Whoever took it is spending
a lot less than she did."**

— *Pretty Good Joke Book, Highbridge Company*

Laughter is known to boost the immune system, lower blood pressure, burn calories and release pleasure-inducing chemicals in the brain.

Go Green!
Receive Social Services Corner by email.
Call (888) 994-3863, ext. 2370, or email info@wrmail.org.

Do you or does someone you know need our assistance? Call toll-free (888) 994-3863 or visit www.wrpioneers.org to find out more about our assistance programs.



The Motion Picture Pioneers Assistance Fund is a program of the Will Rogers Motion Picture Pioneers Foundation.





TAKE A MENTAL HEALTH HOLIDAY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



It is common for all adults to experience some form of the holiday blues at some point during their lives. And it is especially common for older adults to

experience this as their social circle becomes smaller. The causes of feeling down during the holidays may surprise you. In addition to grief or loneliness, stress can be a major contributor to feeling down. Stress and anxiety over travel, gift-giving or family drama can cause feelings of depression and hopelessness.

One way to manage stress is to take a break! Sounds simple, but it's hard to do if you feel the pull of tradition or the obligation of invitations. It is okay to decline an invitation if the logistics of attending an event cause you stress. Another way to avoid stress—and it's challenging—is to ask for help. Worried about hanging those holiday lights? A willing neighbor may be waiting to be asked and may not want to offend you by offering. Don't want to drive in the rain? Don't!

"Beating the Holiday Blues" by the University of Maryland Medical Center 5/27/08 at www.umm.edu/features/holiday_blues.htm.

Splurge on a cab or ask someone for a lift. Helping you may lift their holiday spirits as well.

Not everyone gets down during the holidays. If you delight in the hustle and bustle of shopping, cooking or holiday tunes, enjoy! Try to spread that holiday cheer to others who may need a little lift. Help someone with limited or lost vision by addressing their holiday cards. Wrap gifts for a friend with arthritis.

There is something magical about the holidays that fills us with warmth for neighbors and friends. If you feel that you are missing out on the joy, check in with yourself to figure out what's getting you down. Know that you are not the only one. Hopefully it'll pass when the holidays do. We are always here for you at Will Rogers Motion Picture Pioneers Social Services: (888) 994-3863.

NOTE: *Holiday blues are not the same as depression, which is a serious condition. If you or someone you know seems severely depressed during the holidays or any time, please call 911, take them to a hospital emergency room or notify their doctor.*

NEW ADDITIONS TO THE MPPAF'S NATIONAL RESOURCE DIRECTORY

SNAPforSeniors, www.snapforseniors.com, (206) 575-0728

This website profiles senior service providers throughout the United States. Housing, home health care, medical equipment, adult day care, pharmacies, hospitals, elder law attorneys and more can be located by zip code.

Brain Injury Association of America (BIAA), www.biausa.org

A national directory of brain injury services and helpful brochures are available at this website. The BIAA and its affiliates operate the National Brain Injury Information Center (NBIIIC), which provides personalized information to individuals living with a brain injury, their families and the professionals who serve them. The NBIIIC can be reached at (800) 444-6443 or info@biausa.org.



QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“People are marvelous in their generosity if they just know the cause is there.”

—Will Rogers

To view our entire National Resource Directory, please visit www.wrpioneers.org.