



# VALUES - BASED QUALITY OF LIFE™ Newsletter

*Because Making Smart Choices About Your Money Impacts The Quality of Your Life*

*Over the years, we have found that there are elements of your life that are more important than money. These elements - Physical Health, Relationship Health, Inner Health and Career Health - cannot be delegated.*

*We hope that you find these articles to be of value in improving the quality of your life.*

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*When your values are clear, your decisions are easy. — Roy Disney*

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*A dream is just a dream. A goal is a dream with a plan and deadline. — McKay*

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*We have met the enemy... and he is us! — Pogo*



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**“Walking is the best possible exercise. Habituate yourself to walk very far.”**

**- Thomas Jefferson**

## PHYSICAL HEALTH

### 4 Types of Physical Activities for Older Adults

*By Kendal at Home Blog*

Studies indicate an overwhelming percentage of older adults in the United States prefer to age at home, and one of the best ways to remain independent is to stay physically active.

There is nothing startling in that statement, but new research shows even bigger benefits to exercise for older adults than anticipated. We'd like to share highlights of that research, and then suggest four physical activities for older adults that will keep them healthy – and out of the nursing home.

#### Overview of New Research

Research conducted by the Norwegian University of Science and Technology tested more than 5,000 older adults in a mobile exercise lab and developed an online fitness calculator that would show the fitness age of a person.

Someone who quickly became enthusiastic about this calculator is competitive triathlete Dr. Pamela Peeke, an assistant professor of medicine at the University of Maryland. Peeke is 61 years old chronologically, but her fitness age is an incredible 36. To gather additional data about the importance of exercise for older adults, she encouraged participants of the National Senior Games – known informally as the Senior Olympics – to test themselves on the calculator; more than 4,200 of them did.

#### Astonishing Results

Although the average chronological age of these athletes was 68, the average fitness age was 43 – an astonishing 25 years younger. Men and women alike showed these results and, even more encouraging, these statistics weren't simply skewed by a percentage of super-fit individuals. Nearly every single older athlete tested younger than his or her chronological age. And, many of these athletes began exercising regularly in their middle-aged years – or even later – suggesting that it's seldom too late to benefit from exercise.

#### 4 Types of Exercise to Try

If you're returning to exercise, it's important to discuss a strategy with your doctor. Overall, the National Institute on Aging (NIA) recommends older adults participate in the four main types of exercise.

- Aerobic exercises that increase your breathing and heart rate
- Strength exercises
- Balance exercises
- Flexibility/stretching exercises

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends older adults pick activities they enjoy and match their abilities. This helps them stick with a fitness program. Incorporating other activities keeps older adults from getting bored.

*Continued on back page*

# RELATIONSHIP HEALTH

## 8 Healthy Date Ideas That Aren't Just Dinner

By Anthea Levi

Locking down a dinner reservation is a perfectly fine date idea. But there's something to be said for getting to know a new partner or deepening your connection with your significant other (SO) by doing something a little more out of the box.

Research suggests that couples who do novel activities together are more satisfied with their relationships, perhaps because doing something new and exciting takes them back to the early days, when everything felt new and exciting. If you're in those early days now, trying something creative can reveal sides of your personalities you may not see if you stick to the drinks-dinner-movie script.

Whether you're planning a first "in real life" (IRL) meet up or need inspiration for your weekly date night, give these 8 date ideas a try. They're all health-focused, so you can boost your relationship and your body at the same time.

### Take a sushi-making lesson

Instead of sharing tiger rolls and sashimi at your local sushi restaurant, learn how to make these healthy eats. Cooking schools and many restaurants offer sushi-prep classes. Not only will the interactive experience be fun, it'll also teach you skills you can bring home. And don't forget the tasty meal you score out of it. Triple win.

### Do an exhilarating workout

Couples who sweat together, stay together. Why? Overcoming physical challenges as a twosome can make it easier to turn to each other for emotional support, and that strengthens your bond. Added bonus: Studies show that people are motivated to work harder when they exercise with others. Think beyond a simple jog and bump up the intensity with a more challenging and exhilarating activity, like an indoor rock climbing class, a surf lesson, or a mountain biking excursion.

### Go for massages

While it's great to share adventures together, time spent relaxing is worthy too. Nothing will mellow you two out quite like a couples massage. Splurge on the shared spa service for the ultimate "treat yourself" day, then try your massage therapist's techniques on each other back at home.

### Browse a farmer's market

Daytime dates are underrated. This weekend, take a trip to your local farmer's market,

***"Share your smile with the world. It's a symbol of friendship and peace."***

*- Christie Brinkley*

checking out the offerings and sampling what's for sale. Then head home to cook up your loot for a seasonal and seriously delicious late lunch or early supper. (Don't forget the market's fresh flowers—a nice romantic touch.)

### Play games

Studies suggest that playing board games can lower your odds of cognitive decline. Plus, there's something sexy about enjoying a little friendly competition with your date or partner. With this in mind, break out the Bananagrams, Scrabble, or Monopoly board. If your typical Saturday night involves group drinks with other couples, invite them over to your place instead for some brain-boosting fun and games.

### Bust a move

If it just won't feel like a date unless you dress up, but you don't want to sit around a table or

bar, then go dancing. Whether you decide to get down at the club or sign up for an instructional class, you'll get your heart pumping and your metabolism going. Choose whichever venue feels the least intimidating to you and your partner, then let loose.

### Go to a coffee tasting

Coffee tastings (or "public cuppings," as they're often called) may not be mainstream yet, but they're popping up at an increasing number of cafes and coffeehouses. Why is it such a stellar healthy date idea? Studies suggest that coffee (minus the heavy cream and spoons of sugar) offers big health benefits, including lowering your risk of cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes. Signing up for one as a couple lets you explore coffee from different regions—and get buzzed with a beverage other than alcohol.

### Do a walking tour

Sign up for a walking tour to learn more about your locale and rack up 10K steps at the same time. Plenty of cities offer themed tours, so you can find one that fits your interests—like a guided look at the subway system or an expertly curated walk through the city's largest park. Museum tours and guides through historic sites also allow you two to move around, learn a little history, and strengthen your connection.

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***"The meeting of two personalities is like the contact of two chemical substances: if there is any reaction, both are transformed."***

*- Carl Jung*

# INNER HEALTH

## Research Shows the Health Benefits of Music

By Jacob Devaney

There are many mindfulness practices to stimulate inner awareness, increase health, and elevate our mood. Now we can add to that list practices such as listening to Mozart with your full being while sipping tea, singing a pop-song out loud while you drive across town, or losing your body to ecstatic dancing. Scientific research now shows us the ways that music has a physiological effect on our bodies and can improve concentration, relieve stress, act as an antidepressant and more.

*"Music's beneficial effects on mental health have been known for thousands of years. Ancient philosophers from Plato to Confucius and the kings of Israel sang the praises of music and used it to help soothe stress. Military bands use music to build confidence and courage. Sporting events provide music to rouse enthusiasm. Schoolchildren use music to memorize their ABCs. Shopping malls play music to entice consumers and keep them in the store. Dentists play music to help calm nervous patients."*

*- Mental Health, Naturally: The Family Guide to Holistic Care for a Healthy Mind and Body*

Take a moment and listen to Billie Holiday's Lady Sings the Blues and you will be transported to another time. Sing along with her and you may ooze with the feelings as if they are your own. Crank up Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata and you will be filled with emotions you may have never known existed. This capacity to feel is core to having compassion, yet music also has a profound effect on cognitive processes and learning also.

*"Auditory biology is not frozen in time. It's a moving target. And music education really does seem to enhance communication by strengthening language skills."*

*- Nina Kraus, the Hugh Knowles Professor of Communication Sciences, Neurobiology & Physiology, and Otolaryngology at Northwestern University as well as the principal investigator at the Auditory Neuroscience Laboratory*

### Musical entrainment

Musical entrainment creates connection both internally and externally which can be seen when watching a whole crowd dance to a live band, or the people around you sobbing at an opera. Science explains this as an aspect of mirror neurons, which are a form of mimicking that can happen emotionally and physically. Maybe a song will give you chills, make you cry, or spontaneously start jamming on an air guitar, or dancing uncontrollably. In the study, *The Neuroscience of Music*, published by the Department of Psychology at McGill University, Montreal, researchers found preliminary scientific evidence supporting claims that music influences health through neurochemical

***"One person caring about another represents life's greatest value."***

*- Jim Rohn*

changes in several domains: reward, motivation and pleasure; stress and arousal; immunity; and social affiliation.

*"The potential therapeutic effects of music listening have been largely attributed to its ability to reduce stress and modulate arousal levels. Listening to 'relaxing music' (generally considered to have slow tempo, low pitch, and no lyrics) has been shown to reduce stress and anxiety in healthy subjects, patients undergoing invasive medical procedures (e.g., surgery, colonoscopy, dental procedures, pediatric patients undergoing medical procedures, and patients with coronary heart disease."*

*- The Neurochemistry of Music*

### Human cultural universal

It is no surprise that music has been used in ritual and ceremony since the beginning of time. Women share playlists for the delivery room to welcome new life. You can even higher a hospice harpist to help the transition from a terminal disease. Music education has also been shown to help children's developing brains. So, it is only natural to place it in a category for mindfulness, meditation, and healing.

*"Music is a language of energy, a "vibe" of emotions and joy. It speaks to our core desires and feelings. It spans language barriers and political borders, making it a powerful means through which humans can connect."*

*- Patrick Groneman*

Music is also a reflection of culture. In today's world we are experiencing an unprecedented fusion of ideas through the internet and technology. We are re-mixing historical themes, embellishing forgotten ideas and combining belief systems across time and societies. For instance, electronic dance music has captured wide acclaim as DJs and producers improvise with musical tools that have the ability to drop samples, mix, change tempo, and induce ecstatic states of consciousness. This music has become central to the emerging transformational, or visionary culture that is influencing our world view through integrating art, spirituality, and technology.

As with everything else, it is our conscious intention or lack of it, that makes the difference in our experience. Try exploring new music when you want to get out of a rut. Just as you are what you eat, you should choose your music wisely because it is influencing the way you feel whether you notice it or not.

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# CAREER HEALTH

## Signs It's Time to Quit Your Job

By Alison Doyle

Everyone has a bad day at work now and then. You may furiously leave your office swearing you'll put your two weeks notice in soon. But how do you know when you should give your job a second chance, or when it's really time to quit?

For one, you should always follow your gut. If you deeply hate your job, then you should absolutely start looking for other opportunities. If you're on the fence, then you should open your eyes to feelings, thoughts, and happenings in your life that might point to the exit sign.

### 13 Signs It's Time to Quit Your Job

1. You dread going to work. Do you go to sleep every night dreading the next day of work? While it's normal to have qualms about the work day, if you truly, deeply dread those eight hours at the office, it is time to put in your two weeks notice.

2. You're procrastinating more than you're working. Everyone procrastinates on occasion, but if there's nothing you find engaging about your day-to-day work, you should consider if your current position is really a good fit for you. There should be at least some part of your job that is more interesting than scrolling Facebook or browsing BuzzFeed.

3. It's taking a toll on your health. Are your sick days adding up, out of the blue? Are you taking as much time off as you can possibly get? Are you resorting to a few (or many) glasses of wine each night to get over a bad day at work? Are you working so many hours you have no time to exercise, eat healthily or get enough sleep?

No job is worth sacrificing your wellness.

4. You vent about your job too much. Think about your most common conversations. Are you constantly complaining about coworkers, about your workplace, about your job itself? A job should bring more positive than negative into your life.

5. You're overqualified. There are times when we have to take subpar jobs just to get by, but if you're in a job that you are overqualified for, don't feel stuck.

Stay on alert for positions that fit your skills, which will likely feel more fulfilling than a job that doesn't measure up to your level of expertise.

6. There's no room for advancement. Don't waste time in a position that doesn't offer opportunities for growth. Committing your time and energy to a company that won't support the progress of your career, or grow with you, will end up hindering the development of your career in the long run.

7. The work environment is negative. A negative environment is toxic; if your co-workers are constantly complaining, and your boss is persistently unhappy, the probability of your own contentment is extremely low. Moreover, a pessimistic atmosphere can even kill the passion you have for your career choice. If you find yourself in one, it's time to get out.

8. You're being recruited by other companies. Are headhunters reaching out to you? If so, that's your green flag to move on, if you're unhappy with your current work environment.

9. The company culture isn't a good fit for you. If you crave a flexible, work-from-home environment, but you're stuck at a traditional nine-to-five job, you will probably never be satisfied no matter how much you like other aspects of your position.

If you've tried - and failed - to negotiate a schedule that works for you, consider jobs at other companies that will accommodate your preferred lifestyle.

10. You can't speak up at your job. You should feel confident and comfortable enough at work to voice your opinion, share your thoughts and speak up for yourself. An oppressive environment just isn't worth putting up with.

11. Your job doesn't speak to you. Career-changers are becoming more and more common in this day and age, and you shouldn't feel stuck on a career path that you don't connect with. If you've lost your passion for your job, open your mind to other opportunities that do speak to you, and start moving in a direction that you genuinely feel passionate about.

12. You find yourself justifying your job. "Well, the pay sucks and my boss is a jerk, but my benefits are okay." "My co-workers are nasty and condescending, but at least my salary is decent." "I don't make any money but at least there's free coffee and snacks in the office." Do you find yourself justifying your job to yourself or others, while deep down you know the cons outweigh the pros?

If there's more to complain about than to praise, know that you can find a job that offers more positive than negative, and you should get ready to start looking for it.

13. If you're already contemplating quitting your job, that alone is a sign that it is indeed time to move on.

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## 4 Types of Physical Activities for Older Adults

Continued from front page

### Excellent Resource: Go 4 Life

To look at specific exercise options, go to the Go 4 Life website by the NIA. You can look at the four types of exercise and find a wide range of options you can tailor to your abilities:

- **Endurance exercises**
  - Sports: tennis, golf, pickleball, hockey, seated volleyball, wheelchair basketball
  - Indoor activities: fitness center (treadmill, elliptical machine, stationary bike, rowing machine), swimming laps, water aerobics, dancing, martial arts, bowling
  - Outdoor activities: biking, horseback riding, sailing, jogging/running, skating, snorkeling
  - Around the house: gardening, DVD exercise routines, raking, shoveling snow, sweeping
  - Walking or rolling: hiking, walking the dog, mall walking, wheelchair rolling, race walking
- **Strength exercises:** See this page for exercises specifically targeted for the upper body and the lower body using weights and resistance bands.
- **Balance exercises:** These include tai chi and specific body movements that improve balance.
- **Flexibility exercises:** See specific examples for different parts of your body.

Also scroll down on each of these pages to find tips that help exercise safely.

Whether you're just beginning an exercise regimen or have an established routine, remaining physically active is an important step in maintaining your independence.

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