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How a Workout Buddy Can Improve Your Fitness Success

By Dr. Mercola October 21, 2016

Fitness Partners Increase Your Success

If you're struggling with getting motivated to work out, you'll be interested in research that demonstrates improved results when you work with a partner. Research from the University of Aberdeen evaluated the potential for engaging with a new workout buddy and how much more success you might experience.

This was the first study to also investigate the specific qualities you want to look for in a workout partner.

Researchers asked half of the participants to find a new fitness partner and the other half to continue their usual routine. They found those who found a new partner exercised more than those who followed their consistent routine.

Turns out that using a partner is a better predictor of your physical activity than relying on your willpower.

The Kohler Effect

Working with a partner has a motivating effect on individuals. However, sometimes when people are working in groups that effect can backfire. For instance, some individuals may contribute less effort in a team sport when they feel their individual contribution is not readily identifiable.

However, psychologists have found individuals achieve greater gain in challenging physical activities when they are paired with another individual who has greater ability.

The motivating effect that occurs when an individual exhibits greater capability performing with others rather than individually is called the Kohler effect, named after Otto Kohler, a German industrial psychologist.

Benefits of a Consistent Fitness Routine

✓ Improves Your Cognitive Ability

Several studies have demonstrated improved cognitive performance and perceived cognitive experience immediately after exercise across all age groups.

✓ Lowers Your Blood Pressure

American College of Sports Medicine and the American Heart Association agree exercise helps to lower your blood pressure. People who are sedentary achieve results even with modest increases in physical activity.

✓ Improves Your Immune System

In a study performed on cancer patients in the weeks after receiving chemotherapy, researchers found that exercise boosts the function of T-cells in your immune system. Although mild to moderate exercise improves immunity, research has demonstrated that over-training can lead to a compromised immune system for three to 72 hours after an event.

✓ Lowers Your Risk of Heart Disease

Reduced blood pressure, improved heart muscle function and help with weight management all contribute to a reduction in your risk of heart disease when you regularly exercise.

✓ Improves Weight Management

Although you don't have to exercise to lose weight, it does help. But, doing standard cardiovascular workouts may actually sabotage your weight loss efforts. Instead I recommend incorporating a couple Peak Exercise routines into your weekly program in order to burn more calories and improve your cardiovascular health.

✓ Reduces Insomnia

Exercises improve your sleep by reducing the amount of time it takes to fall asleep and increasing the number of hours you stay asleep.

✓ Helps Elevate Your Mood and Fight Depression

Researchers have demonstrated links between an elevation in your mood both within minutes after exercise and extending in the coming hours and days. Researchers have explained the changes in mood by an endorphin and monoamine hypothesis, believing it may increase body temperature, improve circulation to your brain and improve your reaction to stress.

✓ Lowers Your Risk of Diabetes

Exercise, combined with eating a low carbohydrate diet, may reduce your risk of pre-diabetes or diabetes. Although many who suffer from diabetes do not become or stay regularly active, physical activity improves blood glucose control and may prevent type 2 diabetes.

✓ Slows the Aging Process

No matter how you define aging — whether it's through cognitive decline, telomere length or physical disability, exercise slows the process.