



HEALTHY LIVING 101

By Dr. Kent Ferguson

“Healthy living”, at times, can feel like a lot of work. That feeling begins to change once you can develop healthy habits that suit your lifestyle. Today I am sharing with you, 4 healthy living recommendations. I believe these recommendations can form the cornerstone for “healthy living”.

1) BE NICE TO YOURSELF

This recommendation alone can provide tremendous value to all areas of your life. Why? Because the words that we choose matter. When speaking to yourself it is crucial that you choose your words carefully. The conversations you have with yourself, are the most important ones you will have. Only you can create and maintain your self esteem. In the book “The 4 Agreements” by Miguel Ruiz he refers to this as being “impeccable with your word”. Without this it will be almost impossible to be successful at Healthy Living Recommendations 2-4.

Being nice to yourself, gives you the permission to make mistakes; because you are human. Being nice to yourself will allow you the space and the mind set to learn from mistakes and to improve on your desired outcome the next time to try.

2) MOVE YOUR BODY REGULARLY

In today's work environment, how many people do you know that sit to travel to work, then sit 4-6 hours at work, then sit to travel home from work. Now when they finally get home, they sit to eat dinner then sit to unwind for the evening.

For many people, there isn't the natural opportunity to move and be active during the day. Your body was built to move and to move well. Moving your body fuels your brain and keeps it active. Moving your body helps you to be thoughtful and creative.

If your work responsibilities require you to sit for long periods of time here are some solutions to consider.

- a) Try to give your body 2-3 minutes of movement for every 30 minutes to 45 minutes of sitting during your day (Starrett, K (2016) *Desk Bound*, Victory Belt Publishing Inc, page 42).
- b) Reduce optional sitting in your life. (Starrett, K (2016) *Desk Bound*, Victory Belt Publishing Inc, page 42).

c) If you have an opportunity to use a standing desk at work, you should seriously consider it. Standing at your work station will allow you to achieve more movement for your body during your day.

3) EXERCISE YOUR BODY REGULARLY

It is very difficult to get the amount of exercise needed to combat a sedentary work day. That is why work day modifications and exercise is needed to give your body a fighting chance.

An increasing number of Canadian children and adults are not getting enough exercise. How do we know this? Statistics gathered over the past 30 years, reveal that Canada's overall rate of obesity has tripled.

For this reason, consider making exercise a family habit as well. Our children learn so much from us and this can be a lesson that adds tremendous quality to their lives.

Exactly how much and what form of exercise you need will vary from person to person. In general, we should be attempting to exercise anywhere from 30-60 minutes per day to realize health benefits.

Here are some helpful exercise tips:

- a) Choose a form of exercise that you enjoy!!!
- b) When exercising, pay a great deal of attention to your posture. Paying attention to your exercise posture will allow you to take the movements learned during exercise to your everyday life.
- c) Consider the possibility that it may be best to wake up early in the morning and exercise before work. Morning workouts can give you more energy for your work day. Not to mention that you get a major chore out of the way first thing in the morning.
- d) If you have the opportunity to put a spin bike, treadmill or elliptical machine in front of your main TV then consider doing so, you can easily get 30-45 minutes of exercise by doing this. If you put you put exercise equipment in front of your TV, make sure you use it!

4) MAKE HEALTHY FOOD CHOICES MORE OFTEN

In today's go, go, go world, making healthy food choices can be a difficult thing to do. Maybe you are working 2 to 3 jobs. Maybe you are a full-time student and a part time employee. Maybe you are single and making dinner for one can be a difficult thing to do regularly.

What ever your situation, it is important to make healthy food choices way more often than you make unhealthy ones. I've said this to patients before. Sometimes the response I get is "but I love my pizza". My response is usually great!! But ask yourself this question. Is it reasonable for you to love pizza everyday and expect to enjoy good health? Consider that your goal should be to eat as many fresh fruits and vegetables as possible and get drink plenty of water daily.

Here are some tips to help you make better food choices more often:

- a) Meal planning for your week or the next few days is a great way to make sure you have good food to eat on the run.
- b) If you are prone to overeating, it is important to begin your day with a nutritious breakfast This will prevent you from going many hours without fuel then sitting down to a meal and overeating.
- c) In general, limit the amount of pre-packaged processed foods as much as possible. These foods are typically higher in calories, poor fat and lower in nutritional value.

I hope you have found this information useful. The information that we share is aimed at helping you successfully practice “healthy living” and sometimes making you smile.

Take care,

Dr. Kent Ferguson

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