



newsletter

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PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

The “I” in C.R.E.A.T.I.O.N. Health stands for *Interpersonal relationships*. Think about it, what would life be without our relationships with those around us? Relationships are probably one of the most overlooked areas of health and yet it has one of the most powerful influences. Dr. Dean Ornish has directed clinical research demonstrating, for the first time, that comprehensive lifestyle changes may reverse even severe coronary heart disease, without drugs or surgery. In his book *Love and Survival: The Scientific Basis for the Healing Power of Intimacy*, he writes of the power of love and intimacy when he says “I’m not aware of any other factor in medicine—not diet, not smoking, not exercise, not stress, not genetics, not drugs, not surgery—that has a greater impact

on our quality of life, incidence of illness, and the premature death from all causes.”

The interplay between physical activity and interpersonal relationships is a strong one. When we associate with friends and family that enjoy and are involved in physical activity, we tend to involve ourselves in similar activities. For example, children often follow in the footsteps of their parents. They will follow their example in the types of activities in which they participate. If the father likes to run or ride bikes and takes the children with him, the children will often enjoy these same activities as they grow up. The value our significant others place on physical activity also impacts our involvement in activity. If our spouse values it as much as we do, we can work together to trade off responsibilities while one of us exercises. Or we will make adjustments that will allow the family to exercise all together.

Depending on the size of your family this may take some creative thinking and compromise on the part of some members, but the rewards of exercising together as a family are well worth the effort.

The experience of a former professor and mentor of mine has permanently etched on my mind the power of activity to positively impact relationships. This professor and his wife were committed to one another and to regular physical activity. Every day, no matter the weather, this professor and his wife would rise early in the morning and take a 45 minute walk... together! Just imagine 45 minutes at the beginning of each day with your significant other to talk of your joys, plans, challenges, dreams...and whatever else you want to talk about. Talk about a relationship building activity! How do you think this man and woman would describe the impact of this activity on their relationship? What might be possible for you and your family members?

“When we are confident about our health, this confidence impacts our relationships...”

Physical activity also can help our relationships by how it impacts how we feel about ourselves. Physical activity helps us to have a healthy body through assisting us in gaining and maintaining a healthy weight, cardiorespiratory health, and muscle mass. Increased muscle mass and cardiorespiratory health in turn has a dramatic effect on our sense of wellbeing and personal efficacy. When we are confident about our health, this confidence impacts our relationships in many positive ways. I had a personal training client once that talked about how as she became

stronger physically it impacted her relationships at work in a good way; she was able to have the strength to deal with challenges that arose in a more positive way. This contributed to her happiness with her work, which of course impacted her life in other positive ways.

“Our partners can help motivate us and also help make physical activity more enjoyable.”

Another illustration of how physical activity and personal relationships are intertwined is found in something with which many of us are familiar; having an exercise partner. Our partners can help motivate us and also help make physical activity more

enjoyable. Research shows that they help us stick with our activity. Sometimes knowing that someone will be there to workout with us is just the impetus we need to get those shoes on and get out the door.

We have briefly looked at the very powerful interplay between physical activity and our personal relationships.

What other examples can you think of where your physical activity has impacted your relationships, or how your relationships have impacted your level physical activity?

Let’s take a moment just now to prayerfully consider how we can commit to improving not only our health, but also our relationships, by becoming more physically active. May God bless us as we work in cooperation with Him.



texts of
inspiration

He answered: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’

Luke 10:27

The Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

Genesis 2:18

A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.

Proverbs 11:25

“You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous...”

Matthew 5:43-47

happenings

- Since the last Newsletter, presentations and exhibits have been seen in many places in different states. In the Atlantic Union over 700 teachers and pastors met in Providence Rhode Island for a time of instruction and spiritual refreshing. Elder Carlyle Simmons, who has been an InStep for Life representative for his Union and a member of the InStep committee, arranged for time so that the good word about this North American Division, Health Ministries initiative could be shared with all present at that convention. Many purchased pedometers and registered to be part of the InStep for Life project. Some of the teachers were interested in the program for their schools. Many of the pastors wanted to involve their members and so become a church that represented a healthy and active community and to be seen as a happy, healthy and long living witness for the God who's greatest desire is that we "prosper and be in health."
- From Rhode Island, the good news of health went to Phoenix, Arizona where a few thousand members of ASI were meeting. The Instep booth was displayed and large numbers stopped by to hear the story of how 10,000 steps a day can significantly reduce the risk of most of the major diseases prevalent in our world today. Pedometers were made available through the kindness of Advent Source on their booth. Although in the wisdom of the leadership they did not see the importance of sharing InStep for Life with the general assembly, many signed up to participate in this health giving activity.

- There were 37,000 Pathfinders encamped on a large area in the small town of Oshkosh, Wisconsin. For five days these young people accomplish far more than the baseline goal for good health. An InStep for Life activity began their day with a two and a quarter mile walk as they watched the sun come up. Then there were many miles to be covered as they went from there camping place to the many other activities planned for them on a daily basis. Here again many of the club directors plan to encourage their groups to become more active and to participate in the InStep for Life program when they return home. And not just to engage in this activity for them-selves, but to share their new found energy with the church members. These young people do not want to be part of the statistic which gives 1 in 5 children in the United States are obese. That states that type 2 diabetes is no longer referred to as, Adult Onset, as more and more youngsters becomes victims of this disease primarily due to inactivity.

- The churches in and around Loma Linda are gearing up to launch an all out effort to show how churches can pull together in demonstrating the enormous benefits which result from participating in the InStep for Life project. A number of professionals are leading out in this effort as churches, education and medical facilities join hands to show how following God's plan of being active each day results in happier, more energetic and longer lives to better represent the Creator. More of this exiting development in the next issue. Until then, "Let us not be weary in well-doing" but in creative, innovative ways let us lead those around us on the path to better health.

InStep for Life is a North American Division Health Ministry Initiative