

## Happy New Year and a Half By Diane Knaack

We've all heard of Christmas in July right? Let's take a step forward to New Years...as in New Year's Resolutions. How many of us vowed to eat better and exercise more? How many gave up after a week or two, because we didn't see the scale move or exercise just didn't fit into our schedules?

And now we say, next year, right? How about restarting that resolution at the half year? I know, we all think we need to start that healthier lifestyle on a Monday, after we've had our last hurrah, pigging out on whatever and lying on the couch for hours on end. What if, we decided to start now, not next Monday, not tomorrow, but right now?

I'm not going to get on my soapbox about dieting. I hate that word, hate it with a passion. A diet only sets you up for failure down the road, we all know that. A successful weight loss is about "wanting" and choosing to eat healthier. Not for 6 months or 3 months or even 1 month, but for the rest of our lives, making it our way of life.

Same goes for exercising or as I refer to it, being active. Honestly, when we think of exercise, what comes to mind? Sweating and sore muscles? I don't know about you, but that doesn't sound like fun to me much less going to make me feel good.

There are so many benefits of being active, physically and mentally. No matter how many articles you read, programs you watch on TV or info on the web, we all know the benefits of being active and realize the health problems associated with inactivity.

All too often, once we've made up on our minds to be more active, we go a little crazy, doing too much too soon, because quite honestly if we're going to work out hard, we want results NOW. Many times, we burn ourselves out and don't allow ourselves enough time to make it our lifestyle.

Just as many of the things in life, one size does not fit all. One type of activity does is not for everyone. Just because your neighbor is out running two miles at 5 a.m. or your friend attends fitness classes three times a week, doesn't necessarily "fit" your needs or wants.

Which brings me to a very important point. It shouldn't only be about the "need" to be active but more importantly the "want". There are so many choices when it comes to being active. After trying different activities, you should choose the activities that you like to do, that way you're more likely to continue and surprisingly, even look forward to it.

While joining a health club or taking part in a group exercise class is motivating for some, it many not be something or somewhere you are comfortable with. Mother nature is providing us with the perfect opportunity to get out and be active. With longer days and warmer weather, why not dust off your bike or lace up your walking shoes? How about getting the family involved

or a group of friends? Many times we are more apt to stay with activities if we invite others to join us. Whether we spend our time with another person or several, it makes us accountable to one another and increases the chance of success.

Whatever, whenever, whoever you choose, don't wait for January 1. Start today for a healthier tomorrow.

Diane Knaack

Certified Group Exercise Trainer and Pilates Instructor/National Exercise Training Association

Keywords: New Years Resolutions, exercise, being active, making exercise fun