



**RE-CONNECT**  
**E X E R C I S E**

*Exercise for vital health and wellbeing*

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**Article 1.**      Bringing self-worth to exercise and motivation

**Article 2.**      Are we training too hard - A new marker of exercise intensity

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See video of conference presentation at [www.reconnectexercise.com](http://www.reconnectexercise.com)

# **BRINGING SELF-WORTH TO EXERCISE AND MOTIVATION**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Physical inactivity is one of the leading causes of death in developed countries, responsible for an estimated 22-23% of chronic health disease, 16-17% of colon cancer, 15% of diabetes, 12-13% of strokes and 11% of breast cancer (1). The direct costs of physical inactivity on the health care system is also increasing (2, 3) and 12% of all deaths could potentially be related to physical inactivity (4). Despite the clear evidence of the need for regular exercise, the percentage of adults who meet national physical activity guidelines in the UK, US and Australia are still very low, at 18.8%, 20.6%, and 40.3% respectively (5-7). Factors thought to be associated with physical inactivity include health status, demographic, psychological, behavioural, social, environmental and program related factors. There are currently no set answers for what interventions best increase exercise participation rates (8,9). In our clinic we have observed that developing self-worth and self-commitment increases a person's ability to make consistent healthy lifestyle choices, including increased motivation and adherence to a regular exercise routine. This presentation discusses our observations.

## **OBSERVATIONS**

Below are some images and statements from a small sample of people, taken from a group of over 1000 who, from our observation have made dramatic changes in their life after working on developing their connection with themselves and their self-worth. As well as observed increases in self worth, we have seen significant and sustaining improvements in health, vitality and wellbeing, including a long-term commitment to regular exercise. These people have been participating in healing sessions and self-development course with Universal Medicine and it's associated clinics, based in Australia, UK and Europe. The changes people have experienced in their life are:

- Ceasing drug, medication and alcohol addictions of up to 10 to 20 years duration, to go onto being successful business professionals;
- Weight loss of over a quarter of body mass, including weight gained as a result of traumatic childhood abuse.
- Individuals coming out of long-term adrenal exhaustion to live an energised and vital life with full-time work.
- Hundreds of people returning to and sustaining healthy weight ranges, and a small number of people healing bulimia or anorexia.
- Hundreds of people coming out of long-term depression, suicide attempts or anxiety, who now live their lives full of loving relationships with themselves, friends and families.
- People who have progressed from chronic functional impairment or medically diagnosed diseases such as depression, high blood pressure, diabetes and anxiety disorder to now being medically diagnosed as fully healthy with no conditions.
- A greater commitment to taking care of the body, including maintaining a healthy diet and participating in regular exercise.

**IMAGES – Before and after the development of self connection and self worth**



BEFORE: Age 43



AFTER: Age 53



BEFORE: Age 28



AFTER: Age 40



BEFORE: Age 26



AFTER: Age 34



BEFORE: Age 39



AFTER: Age 51



BEFORE: Age 35



AFTER: Age 45



BEFORE: Age 46



AFTER: Age 55



BEFORE: Age 36



AFTER: Age 50



BEFORE: Age 42



AFTER: Age 55

## STATEMENTS

The following question was also asked of the sample: “On a practical level, what have been the main changes you have made in your life to be where you are today, compared to where you were?” Here are some of the answers:

“Lost 50 kg, live in a way that means that I am connected to my body and also really care about myself. I have broken patterns of low self worth so I really care about my body without sabotage.” (Female, age 50)

“Listening to my body in the choices and the results of the choices I make through a day in – eating, sleeping, training, work, my relationships with the people I meet and family and friends.” (Male, age 56)

“Taking responsibility for my choices. Looking at the choices i make, the way I live, and what I eat and how it affects my body. Taking time, stopping and feeling what is needed rather than pushing through ignoring signs from my body.” (Female, age 41)

“Stopped drinking, stopped smoking, started eating healthily, started valuing and respecting myself and my body, started listening to my body, dealt with underlying hurts.” (Female, age 46)

“Through the support of Universal Medicine I started to look at myself. I always lived as though there was something wrong with me, feeling like I would never be accepted. I had major self loathing and self worth issues. It started with having sessions to deal with the issues I held in my body. I used to not let anyone get emotionally or physically close to me, I lived very isolated from the world. The sessions with Universal Medicine helped me to deal with these deep issues I held in my body; from here my wellbeing and sense of self started to improve and my weight started to shift.” (Female, age 34)

“I have a job I love. Great relationships with friends and family. I eat really well. I have lost stacks of weight. I now love my body and myself. I have an awesome life in general. Before I was miserable, had terrible relationships and hated myself and the way I was living.” (Female, age 55)

“Today I respect my body and what I put into it; therefore no drinking, drugs or sugar is part of my new way of living.” (Male, age 41)

“I changed my life because I reconnected to myself and from there I got to feel what was right for my body, so I gave up gluten, dairy, alcohol, started to deal with my sadness, took responsibility for my own choices in life and stopped blaming others and learned to trust in people and life again. I went back to acute care nursing and realised that I needed to be fit to do the job properly, so I got help from an exercise physiologist and learned how to exercise in a way that supports my body and in a way that suited me. This was a huge support for me.” (Female, age 53)

“I have learned to be more kind and loving with myself. I listen to my body, and feel what it needs in terms of food, exercise and rest, and to the best of my ability, I live from this awareness. I have looked at my own hurts and how they affected the way I lived and have worked on addressing and



healing them. I have given myself permission to develop a loving and joyful way of life, and to share it with other people.” (Female, age 51)

“Becoming loving towards my body and taking responsibility for what I eat, say and how I move. If I am being too hard on the body (or too soft) then I am not honouring it.” (Male, age 45).

## **DISCUSSION**

The observations at our clinic suggest that an increased level of self-worth, self-care and self-responsibility results in an increase in one’s ability to make long-term healthy lifestyle choices that lead to the sustained improvements in health, wellbeing and quality of life as quoted above.

**We have observed that individuals with low self-worth, low self-care or low self-responsibility may be more likely to:**

- not carry a regard for themselves and how they treat their body,
- more easily make negative or unhealthy lifestyle choices,
- more easily live with physical inactivity and poor diets,
- have difficulty making ongoing positive or healthy lifestyle choices such as regular exercise.

**We have observed that people beginning to truly value, take care of and take responsibility for themselves are more likely to:**

- hold themselves and their body in a higher regard and care,
- act on a greater commitment to taking care of themselves,
- find a new ease with consistently making positive and healthy choices such as regular exercise,
- feel that they deserve health and wellbeing and to be taken care of,
- begin to stop self-abusive or self-destructive behaviours or patterns that may have been active for 10-20 years.

If a lack of self-worth, self-care or self-responsibility is in fact related to physical inactivity, should we not consider; **is the physical inactivity epidemic actually a lack of self-worth epidemic?**

## **CONCLUSION**

- Through the Universal Medicine and Esoteric Healing Clinics world wide we have observed over 1000 and up to 2000 people improve their self connection and self-worth and increase their ability to make consistent healthy lifestyle choices, including regular exercise participation and healthy eating.
- Further research would help to scientifically characterise the self-worth or self-commitment that has resulted in the sustained improvements in health and wellbeing. Including an investigation of the methods used at our clinic to achieve these outcomes.
- A greater scientific understanding about the methods used to improve self worth and self-connection at the Universal Medicine and Esoteric Healing Clinics may help to better understand how to support humanity to increase healthy lifestyle choices.

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# ARE WE TRAINING TOO HARD A NEW MARKER OF EXERCISE INTENSITY

Danielle J Pirera, Serge Benhayon

## INTRODUCTION

Does the increase in research showing the benefits of explosive bursts of high-intensity training (1,2) explain the growing number of high-intensity fitness programs available worldwide? Or what is driving people to train harder and harder? With the growing number of high-intensity training programs and fitness instructors who run these, there appears to be lack of awareness or understanding of how much intensity is too much, or when high-intensity becomes extreme-intensity, when benefits are actually lost by the harm done to the body.



What if the aim of exercise was to truly support the body, to be healthy and well, both in the short-term immediate future and in the long-term future – would the workout be different? Is it possible that the workout would be done without putting any potential strain or inflicting harm on the musculoskeletal system and all physiological systems, including the cardiovascular and nervous system and the adrenals, which can all be compromised during extreme intensity or duration training?

If we were to train in a way that did not place any unnecessary or unhealthy strain on the physical and physiological aspects of the body, how would we monitor where this point was, and how would we ensure that enough exercise had been completed to experience the many benefits of exercise? We have introduced a method for monitoring exercise intensity that ensures that the workout is at a quality, level and duration to develop true health and wellbeing. It does not involve heart rates or workloads, but is instead according to what is felt in the breath and the body by the individual. This method requires a high level of self-connection and body awareness as well as an understanding of quality in breath, movement and presence and a commitment to constantly choosing this.

## METHODS

Each participant in our exercise groups or one to one training sessions is encouraged to practise the following steps to develop a quality in their breath, presence and way of moving:

1. Connect to self, breath and body with a simple gentle breathing exercise, followed by a body scan.
2. Become aware of the quality of the breath in and out through the nose and any anxiety,

shortness or shallowness of breath or tension, holding, hardness, numbing, raciness or heaviness present in the body.

3. With a gentle breathing technique, develop a natural and surrendered quality in the breath and the way in which the body is held or left to be in a natural posture without any unnecessary physical tension. (This step to let go and surrender to a gentle breath with no raciness or physical tension may take time and require additional tools).
4. Make a marker of the quality of breathing and how the body feels in a natural posture, without any tension, strain, hardness or bracing in the body.
5. Maintain awareness of the breath and body throughout the exercise program, feeling how the breathing rhythm will change and feeling how the physiology in the body also changes, but ensuring that it does not drop into tension, holding, hardness, raciness or strain, in both breath and the body.
6. Ongoing development of a relationship with personal breathing and physical markers in the body of when the quality of the workout begins to decrease and tension or strain is brought to the body.
7. Training at their own pace or intensity according to what is felt in the body, with no need to move in time with everyone else in group fitness setting.



Re-Connect Exercise Groups

## OBSERVATIONS

Individuals who practise this way of being with their body during exercise are not only experiencing great benefits in their physiological health and wellbeing, but also in their psychological wellbeing in terms of self-worth and self-confidence. See below for a list of statements from individuals following this way of exercising, which we call “Re-Connect Exercise”:

"Re-Connect Exercise sessions have completely changed my attitude to exercise. It is great fun to exercise in a group with the freedom to feel what and how I need to exercise and learn to trust and honour my body again." (Female, age 46)

"With Re-Connect I have learnt how to stay with my body during exercise rather than checking out to music as I used to do. Aside from being more fun, it leaves me feeling invigorated, very connected with myself and vital." (Female, age 49)

"I've been attending Re-Connect Exercise groups and they have helped me bring a greater level and quality of awareness to the weight training exercises I already do. As I gradually incorporated



the Re-Connect Exercises into my workouts I found that I accessed a depth, quality and feeling in my body like no other exercise regime that I have tried before... and that's in 30 years of exercising." (Male, age 46)

"After attending a Re-Connect Exercise group recently with Danielle, I have been experiencing how much fun I can have exercising and knowing now that there are no rules, I just feel what my body needs, what type of exercise, and what level - depending on how my body is feeling that day. This is a great difference compared to the pushing through that we are taught, no matter how our bodies are feeling. I feel more energised and more connected to myself throughout the rest of the day just by allowing some time for me and my daily exercise." (Female, age 21)

"The four-week Re-Connect Exercise programs are not only fun but deeply supportive for my body. To move within its own realm and loving rhythm has helped me hold an appreciation for the body I now have that I did not have before." (Female, age 41)

"I have been doing Re-Connect Exercise via the Internet for the past few weeks and have been so inspired at how simple exercise can be. I now take that way of doing a workout to the gym with me, to work with me, away on business with me. The only thing I really need in all those scenarios is me and what I have found works in my body. Thanks Danielle. I look forward to the next group exercise program." (Female, age 45)

"Re-Connect Exercise has enabled me to see how loving, gentle and joyful exercise can be. It is a wonderful way to connect to the body." (Female, age 49)

"The gentle exercises are a lovely way to be with me, allowing me to tune into what my body really needs. It stops the push and the mind chatter, so the energy stays with the exercises making them all the more beneficial. I love gentle exercises, they are fun and effective." (Female, age 53),

"During and following the Re-Connect Exercise groups with Danielle, I have discovered that exercise can be lots of fun! By learning to listen to my body, and developing this awareness more and more, I am learning that I can exercise in a way that supports my body without having to push or strain myself, while having a great workout at the same time! A highly recommended (fun) way to exercise!" (Female, age 46)

"Since I started doing Re-Connect exercise each morning and sometimes every second morning, I can feel just how lovely it is to exercise in a gentle way while also getting a working-out! It's a freeing, non-restricting, beautiful movement that leaves me with even more energy for the day - I feel myself letting go as if I was a child playing again. So Refreshing." (Female, age 16)

"The exercise classes have been awesome. I have never exercised in my life and really didn't think it was something for me. I now love exercising and finding muscles in my body that I never knew existed. I don't have to hurt my body or overdo it. In the class I have been supported to go at my own pace, connect with my body and build it gently and I love it and look forward to each and every class. As my body has slowly strengthened, I have felt so much better in my body and in my moods. It supports me for the whole day." (Female, age 34)

## **DISCUSSION AND FURTHER RESEARCH**

Is it possible that monitoring exercise intensity and workout duration according to time, sets, reps, a music track or in competition with another may not be in tune with what the body truly needs to exercise for true health and wellbeing? If not for true health and wellbeing then what is the goal or aim of such exercise?

Day to day variation in exercise intensity, duration and type can be modified according to the natural and cyclic changes in the body and by making changes during a training session according to what is felt in the body. Exercising in such a way requires a high level of body connection and awareness and also allows for a choice in the quality of the movement of each exercise.

Introducing a way of exercising that is according to a quality of breath and presence in the body may be a way to educate trainers about a safe and effective way of exercising for true health and wellbeing. It is the responsibility of the scientific community and leaders in the exercise industry to introduce a way of exercising that is for true health and wellbeing, that is achievable, enjoyable and inspiring for everyone and not in any way harmful for the body.

Further research is needed on this way of exercising or being in the body, and the many benefits, to support an increase in awareness within the fitness industry of exercising for true health and wellbeing.

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