Alternatives To Exercise

By: Haven Kramer

Your doctor says you're developing Type-2-Diabetes, you are extremely obese and need to start exercising. You say you don't like exercising and don't plan on starting anytime soon. The doctor states that if you don't start exercising you will be prone to having a heart attack before you reach 40. At this point you have two choices, continue the path you are on or start exercising. What do you choose? As a professional I would say choose to start exercising but to get into the right mindset I would also say to try and find alternatives to those dreaded exercises. What I mean by this is find physical activities you like or even simple alternatives to your daily activities, start doing them and doing them more frequently.

Even though exercise is the most effective way to lose weight, it is not the only way to lose weight. When it comes to weight loss, the only way to lose weight is from a caloric deficit. Meaning, you must use more calories than your intake. It does not matter if you exercise with traditional exercises or not, you only have to do enough physical activity so that you are burning more energy than you are consuming. There are various physical activities that can replicate the energy exertion needed to burn a similar number of calories that exercise does. These physical activities are usually hobbies that we enjoy doing but have lost interest in or don't take the time to do them.

Certain physical activities like hiking, walking the dog, various sports and many other physical activities can be a substitute to structured exercise. For example, I just recently got back from Vancouver where I did a mountain hike called "The Grouse Grind". In the hike, I walked up a staircase that is attached to a 4100-foot mountain. It felt like being on the highest level of a stair climber for 2 hours. It was a great workout even it was not treated as a workout. This goes to show you that you don't have to go to the gym and exercise to lose weight. Now not all physical activities will make you lose weight and become healthy quickly. It is up to you to decide what physical activities you want to incorporate into your life to achieve the weight loss goal you have set for yourself.

If you want to lose weight and become healthy fast, you must exercise more frequently and at a greater intensity. The same goes for alternative physical activity. If you want to lose weight and become healthy fast without exercise, you must do some form of physical activity more often and at a greater intensity. As previously stated, I did a hike up a mountain. The hike created a high enough intensity that if I did it more often, I would be able to lose the weight that I wanted to lose and become a healthier individual because of it. Similarly, you can choose to go up a flight of stairs vs using the elevator. This is an alternative daily physical activity to a stair climber at a gym.

If you are a person who does not like to exercise, but your doctor says you have to . . . Don't fret. The doctor is only saying that you need to start making healthier choices. Start with finding physical activities within your current lifestyle that will work just as well as exercise done at a gym. The bottom line is this, if you don't like to exercise but have to, find alternatives to exercise. Take those stairs instead of the elevator or walk the golf course rather than driving the cart (cardio), walk to the grocery store take a wagon with you and pull your load back home (strength training), sprint to the mailbox and back (intensity training), With these small changes to daily activity you will find it will snowball and you will begin to have more energy and will actually be able to do more exercises more often. Your body will thank you.