

Learn how to add natural movement to your life

New book offers mobility tips for older adults

LOUISE RACHLIS

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Despite the phrase “sitting is the new smoking,” sitting isn’t the problem, says Amanda Sterczyk, author of the new book *Move More, Your Life Depends On it: Practical Tips to Add More Movement to Your Day*.

“*Too much* sitting is the problem,” says the resident of Old Ottawa South. “Too many consecutive minutes and hours of sitting without regular breaks to stand up and move around.”

It’s a problem for both young and old. “One of my favourite quotes about aging and physical inactivity is from Don Tabb, an American pastor who recently passed away at the age of 85,” she says. “Tabb said ‘People are living well into their 70s. The problem is, we’re not dying until our 80s or 90s.’ The World Health Organization has identified physical inactivity as the fourth global risk factor for premature death, behind high blood pressure, smoking and high blood sugar. This societal adoption of physical inactivity is prematurely aging our society, and the golden years are beginning to look more like the ‘stiff and sore years.’”

Older adults are the fastest-growing demographic on so-



Amanda Sterczyk’s mission is to help people add more movement to their lives in order to feel better and enjoy life. *ALLISON MUNDLE*

cial media platforms like Facebook, she says, and more than half of the users are accessing social media with mobile devices. “Older adults hunched over their smartphones while they update their social media status — sounds like they have a lot more in common with their teenage grandchildren than the youngsters would like to admit.”

Mobility — the ability to move freely and easily — in older adults is critical for maintaining in-

dependence and keeping costly, long-term care and health services to a minimum. “A six-month delay in admittance to a nursing home can reduce health care costs drastically.”

Sterczyk’s mission is to help people add more movement — both exercise and non-exercise activity — to their lives in order to feel better and enjoy life. She offers Essentrics group and private sessions, online movement coaching and workshops, fitness house

‘GET OFF YOUR BUTT AND MOVE MORE’

Here are some of Amanda Sterczyk’s tips to help older adults increase non-exercise activity.

Embrace the snowball effect: Ready for some good news? The activity our bodies crave and need can happen in minuscule increments. Indeed, a study in the *Journal of the American Heart Association* reported that physical activity that was accumulated in sporadic bouts throughout the day still reduced the risk of early death. The total amount of daily physical activity is more important than how you accumulate that activity.

Be “so last century”: Think about how you used to live in the 1960s, ’70s, and ’80s — before labour-saving devices and apps made our lives so convenient. Instead of online shopping, you went to the store and walked the aisles; instead of reach-

ing half a foot to answer a call on your smartphone, you stood up and walked to the phone on the wall or side table; instead of loading a dishwasher, you filled a sink with warm water and washed all the dishes by hand.

Eschew the drive-thru: One of the ways our environment discourages physical activity is the drive-thru window. Whether it’s a drive-thru coffee shop, fast-food joint, pharmacy or bank ATM, it’s a convenience that equates to short-term gain, long-term pain in the form of deteriorating your physical health. Be good to your body, park the car and walk into the business establishment in question.

Be inefficient: Do you putter in your home or garden? I believe puttering is a bit of a lost art, and it’s a great way to get yourself moving. Every bit of movement helps, so putter away!

calls and online personal training. Essentrics is a dynamic workout based on the theories of Miranda Esmonde-White to lengthen and strengthen muscles for greater joint mobility.

“Physical activity doesn’t need to be costly, complicated or time-consuming,” said Sterczyk, who holds a Master’s degree in social psychology from Carleton University. Before her career in fitness she worked in health promotion research and human resources.

“It does need to happen every single day. No special clothing, fancy equipment or expensive gym memberships are required. Just a commitment to get off your butt and move more.”

Move More, Your Life Depends On it is available on Amazon: www.amazon.com/author/amanda-sterczyk.

There will be an official book launch Wednesday, Sept. 19, 7-9 p.m. at Function Physiotherapy, 1185 Bank St. in Old Ottawa South.