



GET FIT *and Live Longer*

Scientists Agree... **DANCING** is the Best Way

“Take care of your body. It’s the only place you have to live.” ~Jim Rohn

The other day, I saw a clip from a video of the Rolling Stones’s last world tour. Mick Jagger was prancing around the stage like an eighteen-year-old.

It was a bit depressing. Why can’t I do that still? I used to be a demon dancer. Well, I thought I was at the time, like teenagers do. I don’t feel like a demon dancer now. I really ought to get some more exercise.

Do you feel like that? That you ought to exercise, but you can’t really get up the steam to do it? That somehow, it’s all too much hassle, even though we all know how important it is?

I’m always looking for some way of doing exercise that I enjoy and will

stick with. Are you like me? You’ve tried, but it doesn’t work out.

I took up swimming before work. You have to wear your work clothes and change in and out of them. Your hair gets wet and takes ages to dry. If you’re unlucky, you drop your suit jacket on the muddy changing room floor. So, you go to work with a jacket with a dirty stain on it. Plus, you smell of chlorine all day and get plantar warts.

When I was well into my corporate life, I went to a gym, but that wasn’t much fun. I was always tired, even before the extra journey to get there. There are all those incomprehensible machines to make you do unnatural things. It’s boring, nobody talks to anyone else, and the changing rooms smell horrible.

I took up running. That was better, although mostly still nobody to talk to. At least it was outside in the fresh air. I even ran to work sometimes, although you have all the shower and change of clothes difficulties at work then.

I did a few fun runs and that was a bit of a laugh—but I got quite fit! Then I had a small accident and suddenly running wasn’t a good idea any more. Bad for the back, bad for the knees.

Since then I’ve been sure to keep on walking... every day. But it’s rather boring, doing the same walks over and over again. And it isn’t any fun at all when it’s raining. No wonder people don’t get enough exercise.

Here I am, still not that fit and getting a bit less fit as each year goes by and making the same old New Year’s resolutions.



I came across an article about how scientists had determined the best exercise for a long and active life.

Yeah, I want to live a nice long time. Show me where to sign up! Scientific research shows that the best exercise you can get to live longer and in better health is dancing. What? The old fashioned, “may I have the pleasure”, ballroom type dancing? (Well, it is very popular now.) How can that be the latest, best new exercise hack?

Scientists agree that dancing does much more for your body, your

muscles, and your brain than many other physical activities. You have to be disciplined, coordinated, and flexible. You need good posture and strong muscles. You have to control your breathing.

It keeps your brain active because you have to integrate so many different things at once – moving your arms, legs and head in the right way, keeping in time to the music. You have to be aware of others on the dance floor and gracefully avoid them. You have to memorize the steps.

All of that work makes your brain develop more cells and a bigger hippocampus. It helps protect you against memory loss, and cognitive decline. It’s great for preserving your sense of balance; dancers don’t fall over as they get older and so they stay out of the hospital and live longer.

It’s sociable; mostly you dance with other people. And you can practice at home if you want. It lifts your spirits. You live longer, you’re happier, you have more energy, and you make friends. So, a lot of scientific reasons



to motivate you to get dancing.

What did the scientists miss, though? They missed that it is loads of fun to dance. They missed that this is something that you can really love doing. They missed that there's a huge variety of styles... that there's always something new to learn. Tap, salsa, Zumba, ballet, ballroom, country, barn, folk, Morris, Russian, Hungarian, jazz, modern, line dancing – too many types to list!

I love sixties music best. What can beat the Stones's great hit, "Satisfaction" for a great dance number? Look, the Stones are still out there playing to the crowds. They are still dancing and show few signs of giving it up, for all their age. They look as though they love it.

The scientists missed talking about motivation too. As I was saying, it's a big issue for exercise, finding the motivation to do it. It's a big issue for me and loads of people just like me. So, we need to do something that we actually want to do. We need to find ways of making exercise such fun that we'd rather be doing that than anything else.

If the music makes your heart sing, then dancing might be the exercise for you to get fit again. Of course, if you love dancing already, then what's to stop you? And we'll be doing our brains a favour as well. Hearts and brains both love dancing.

ABOUT ROSEMARY BOINTON: Having lived in twelve different countries and sailed the Atlantic in her own boat, Rosemary Bointon's passion is thinking up new adventures and challenges for older people to do NOW, to help them have loads of fun in longer, more fulfilled and active lives. You can find her on medium.com/@RosemaryB and on Twitter at @Agingchallenges.

An abridged version published here, the complete post Get Fit and Live Longer appeared first on www.TinyBuddha.com.

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