

Hello and welcome to 2005!

What do you do for exercise and what is it that keeps you going? I want to look back on my life this month and share some things that I did and what kept me going. Perhaps something here will help you on your journey.

I remember when I was young I always took our dog for a walk because I felt SHE needed the exercise. I didn't consciously do the walks for myself but instead for my dog.

In high school, instead of taking the bus to school, I often walked. This was easy to do because I was going someplace. Going for a walk just to walk for health was hard for me at that time, but walking to a location was a piece of cake.

As an athlete, I did all sorts of sports as a child and I wasn't out there to win. I was doing a lot of the sports because my parents wanted me to and it was how I could do things with my brothers and parents. I wanted to be with them. This definitely kept me fit and it was fun doing things with the family!

As an adult athlete, I was married and had a very supportive husband. He could see that I had some talent, so he encouraged me to pursue cross country skiing, running and cycling. I, at that time, was lost and not sure what I wanted to do with my life so, I accepted his encouragement. During those competitive years, I grew and matured a lot more than I could have ever imagined. I again wasn't out to win, I was out to see how good I was, although I am proud as ever for the running record I placed 20 years ago and still hold and for having competed in the Tour de France de Feminin.

My father and I used to hike, ski, play tennis, swim and backpack together a lot. I did these also with high school friends as well. Here it was the camaraderie that I enjoyed as well as being out in nature.

In high school, gaining weight was something I never wanted to do. I suspect the culture as well as probably my family had a lot to do with that internal nag within me. When I lived in Sweden, my senior year of high school, I became anorexic. During this time I not only had an eating problem, I also walked the long way to and from school and often went cross country skiing in the evening after dinner with a head lamp. I was overly physically active to keep any excess weight from weighing me down. I encourage no one to take this route. This was not a healthy route; it is a very addictive damaging route.

While working with international students I always organized hikes, bike rides, ski trips, basketball games and other sporting events so I could exercise with the students.

When I drive someplace, I always park far away so I can get more fresh air as well as a bit more walking. When in a building with both stairs and elevators, I always take the stairs if I am alone. These two are just little things that on a day to day basis add up to a lot, something not to ignore.

So, what can you do to get started and keep yourself exercising? It is a new year. What new goals do you have for this year? Is fitness one of them? If so, check out:

- Acknowledge the support you probably already have from family and friends
- Find a buddy to exercise with or go to a movie with after exercising (award)
- Try walking to do errands instead of driving
- Drive to one location and walk from there to do all other errands

The list is endless with so many great possibilities and it is things like this that kept me going. It is ok to have and use things like this.

Today as a fitness trainer, I do exercise for my own health. I can do it with buddies as well as alone. I can take a walk for MY health as well as to exercise an animal or with a friend. As a profession, I have chosen to be here to help push you along when that is needed. It is a great place to be. As I look at my father and watch myself age, I have all the hopes to be as healthy as my father is if I live to be 82.

My father currently is 82 years old and he walks and/or bikes six days a week. He takes a 6 mile walk with my sister once a week. They do this in less than 2 hours. This is a great motivation to keep me going. What is the motivation out there to keep you going?

I think it would be good for you to know what works for other people on the same journey. Please send me some things that work for you or don't work for you and I will post them in a future newsletter. Let us go into 2005 totally committed to our body and our wellbeing. Remember you have loved ones who care, I care and hopefully you care too. Keep up the good work and take advantage of all the little helpers out there helping you.

Happy 2005!  
Carol Lee

P.S. I lent one of my yoga books to someone and I can't remember who. It is the book about yoga for people over 50. Do you have this book? I need this book for the Baxter Fitness Solutions yoga class. If you have it, are you finished with it? Thanks.