

SENIOR SCAPE: Fitness...

Fitness, Home Renovation and Computers

By Sylvia Dickens

Last week, Jim posted this: "After the age of 50, the human body naturally begins to lose muscle strength. By the age of 70, most people have lost an average of 30 per cent of their strength. If you don't use it, you lose it."

While there are truths in that statement, it's not entirely correct. Even if you use it, you can still lose strength which also directly links to stamina.

Let's face it. Our bodies become tired from decades of wear and tear. This is especially true if you repeatedly force your body beyond its capabilities.

If you didn't seriously damage your body over the years, you're lucky. No doubt you will feel some aches and pains that limit your ability to do that heavy lifting, bending and kneeling that you once did.

Doing home renovations and even general upkeep can become a daunting task the more your body has suffered. For some, disease and unrelated accidents make such challenges difficult if not impossible.

What are your options at that point?

Well, you can just let your home go, which is not the best choice, but sometimes the only one. You can find someone to help you, such as a friend, neighbor, family relation or sometimes churches and other community groups can help. The thing is, they don't necessarily have the time or the skills to do the work that is required.

Your last option is to just sell up and move into a condo or other accommodation that does not require any physical work by you. If you're accustomed to living in your own home, this might be the least desirable option.

Fortunately, there is one more option if you have an age-related condition that interferes with your ability to look after your own home.

If you have a permanent disability or diminished ability brought on by aging and are living on a low to moderate income, you could qualify for a Home Repairs for Independent Living grant of up to \$5,000 offered through York Region. It is designed to help seniors stay in their homes. The catch is that there are only enough grants for 100 households. The money can go to minor renovations, modifications, urgent repairs such as ramps, handrails, visible fire alarms, grab bars, raised toilets, bathtub conversions, lighting improvements and other repairs.

The deadline for applications is August 30, 2013.

For more information call 1-888-256-1112, or TTY 905-762-0401 or download an application from their web site:

<http://www.york.ca> - Housing and Long-Term Care section.

Stuck in the black-phone era?

Have you decided that you do not need to know how to use a computer? If so, you remind me of one of my old bosses. He was so reluctant to learn a new technology that he decided he couldn't learn.

He was the vice-president who was very comfortable with the black rotary phone, until the other boss decided to upgrade and add two extension lines. This required adding three buttons to the bottom of the phone: one for hold and two external lines. No matter how much you instructed him, he would become flustered and plead to have the old phone back. Imagine how lost he'd be today with all our high tech items: computers, iPads, blackberries, cell phones, etc.

Are you still in the black phone single line era?

Computers offer so much. For me, I love the creativity that it inspires, both in writing and designing web sites and handouts. I love working with images, removing background distractions from photos and fixing the quality.

It's understandable that you would be apprehensive about using a computer. Everyone felt that way when they first came on the market. It's even more intimidating as we get older and set in our ways. I learned computers a bit at a time, first a word processing program for writing and over the years, gradually added new skills. To me, this is the best way to learn as there's less to remember at a time.

The Computer Club starts its new season on Tuesday morning, September 10. This will be a Q&A session where you can ask

questions and also answer questions posed by the trainers. They're interested in knowing what are your interests regarding computers and related paraphernalia: tablets, mobile computing devices and other technology.

The computer basics class is ideal to get you started if you have no experience.

For more information on the Aurora Seniors' Centre and all it has to offer, drop by 90 John West Way, visit the web site www.auroraseniors.ca, email auroraseniors@rogers.com or call 905-726-4767 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday to Friday.