

SENIOR SCAPE: Healthy in body...

Healthy in Body, Mind and Spirit

By Jim L. Abram

Activities and Events at your Aurora Seniors' Centre are not there just to keep busy. Nor for filling up the hours to avoid boredom. They are also for the healthy maintenance of the body, mind, and spirit which may seem to lag a bit from elderly issues that occur as we age.

We know that taking care of our bodies involves our physical muscles. But we also have so-called "mental muscles." The factors of the mind and body both need to be exercised "use it or lose it! What are our mental muscles? Reason, Imagination, and Memory are a few. Knowing right from wrong also helps too. We learn these traits, morals and values from an early age but as we get older we sometimes forget.

Our cells renew constantly, including our brain cells. Brain activity needs to be stimulated to keep our brains healthy and memories strong. Exercising our mental muscles with fun yet challenging elderly activities will help with this. And we have lots.

How about we take a look just at a Monday at your Seniors' Centre? There are the organized activities listed below but that's not stopping you from just dropping by to read the newspaper (provided free of charge to members weekdays while quantities last), read a book in the Library, play snooker in the Pool Room, start that project you've always said you wanted to do in the woodshop, catch up on-line in the Computer Room or just enjoy a coffee and conversation with friends in the Lounge or on the outdoor patio. Or find some like-minded friends to enjoy a game of bocce with!

At 9 a.m., the Tai Chi self-healing exercise program allows registered participants to keep healthy in mind, body, and soul. The industrious woodworkers also start their projects at this hour on Monday, while others keep active with a friendly game of badminton. A great start to the day to work off those extra pounds you gained on the weekend!

And let's not forget another one of life's wondrous pleasures as the Knotty Knitters enjoy crafts and conversation, sharing all the topics of the week. The Knotty Knitters would love to see you there for fun and enjoyment.

The morning ends with the pFIT Group Strength Training Program for registered members. pFIT is a 30 minute leg-strengthening class. After the age of 50, the human body naturally begins to lose muscle strength and by the age of 70, most people have lost an average of 30% of their strength. So if you don't use it, you lose it! pFIT is starting a new eight-week session in September. Refer to your ASA August Newsletter for details about the free "Try It" class on September 23 at 10.30. You need to reserve your space early for this popular program.

The afternoon starts with Duplicate Bridge, or, if you'd prefer, Mah-jong, a game that originated in China and is commonly played by four players (with some three-player variations found in Korea and Japan). The game of Mah-jong and its regional variants is widely played throughout Eastern and Southeastern Asia and has a small following in Western countries. Similar to the Western card game rummy, mahjong is a game of skill, strategy and calculation and involves a certain degree of chance.

Monday ends with the Stretch and Tone Program where registered members partake in a gentle form of exercise from China consisting of Qigong movements to improve balance and breathing and help maintain a better range of motion. Or try out Pickleball as Monday afternoon pickleballers welcome newcomers to the game. Pickleball is a racquet sport which combines elements of badminton, tennis, and table tennis. The sport is played on a court with the same dimensions as a doubles badminton court. The net is similar to a tennis net, but is mounted two inches lower. The game is played with a hard paddle and a polymer smaller version of a wiffle ball. You will like the game and the players who play it!

My Final Word: I don't want to hear anyone say again "I don't like Mondays".

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.