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Joint Resolutions

These simple steps can lead to healthier joints

- The human body uses over 140 different joints to perform a variety of movements.
- Joints support the equivalent of six times your body weight in repetitive cycles of movement.
- It's estimated that by the year 2020, one in five people will have some form of arthritis.

Sources: Arthritis Foundation, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

If you were like the Tin Man in the *Wizard of Oz*, you could use your trusty oil can to lubricate your joints whenever you started to feel a little creaky. You wouldn't have to worry about damaged cartilage, or whether you'd be among the nearly 30 million Americans who suffer from osteoarthritis, a disease that results from cartilage damage.

Although the Tin Man's method of caring for his joints may seem easy, it's just as simple to follow your own road to joint health. The Arthritis Foundation suggests the best way to keep joints moving fluidly and pain-free is to maintain the cartilage that surrounds the joints. Because there are no nerves in cartilage, any degeneration of this rubbery cushion usually goes unnoticed -- until it has degenerated to such an extent that bone is pressing against bone, resulting in debilitating pain. The good news is that you can often head off this problem with some preventive steps in the right direction.

The Arthritis Foundation and the National Center for Disease Prevention offer the following suggestions for a lifetime of joint health:

Maintain your ideal body weight

Being overweight increases your risk of joint problems because of the increased and often unbalanced pressure on the joints. For instance, every extra pound you gain puts four times the stress on your knees. Research indicates that losing even a few pounds may cut your risk of developing osteoarthritis of the knee by half.

Eat right

Nourish your joints by eating a high-fiber, low-fat diet. Be sure to include omega-3 fats (found in cold-water fish), which provide natural lubrication for your joints. Vitamin and mineral supplements are important, too, especially the antioxidant vitamins A, C and E, which help repair connective tissue and reverse joint degeneration; and the minerals calcium, manganese, chromium and zinc. Additionally, the nutritional supplements glucosamine, chondroitin, and the herb *Boswellia serrata* have been shown to stimulate healthy joints.

It's also important to know which foods may cause problems with the joints. Gout, for example, results when more uric acid is formed than the body can eliminate. The acid crystallizes and settles in the joints (most often in the big toe), causing excruciating pain. Certain foods, such as shellfish, red meat and an excess of alcoholic beverages may increase uric acid levels.

Exercise regularly

Regular, moderate exercise can reduce joint pain and stiffness, build strong muscle around the joints, strengthen joints and ligaments, and increase flexibility and endurance. Swimming, water aerobics, walking (on flat surfaces) and tai chi all benefit your joints by offering a full range of movement. Strength training (lifting weights) also is beneficial, as it creates denser bones and builds stronger muscles, which then help stabilize and protect your joints.

Use good body mechanics

Joint health is affected by how you use your body. Your posture when sitting or standing and your position when you move determine how much strain is put on your joints. The following "body mechanics" tips will help protect your joints:

- Stand up straight. An erect posture protects the joints in your neck, back, hips, and knees.

- If you stand to work, make sure the height of your work surface is adjusted to minimize stooping.
- The proper height for a work surface when you're sitting is two inches below your bent elbow.
- When carrying large or heavy objects, hold the object close to your body with the weight supported on your forearms.

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<> YOUR WEALTH

Accessing Your Inner Organizer

Conclusion of our interview with Liz Franklin, author of "How to Get Organized Without Resorting to Arson"

Not everyone has the same organizing "style," and therein, says author and professional organizer Liz Franklin, lies the problem. Getting organized can be a snap, as long as you aren't trying to play against type. In this conclusion of our interview, Ms. Franklin shares her tips on organizing in a way that's personally meaningful -- by accessing your own inner organizer.

How can we identify when it's time to delegate and how does that affect organizing?

First, sort things into three categories: Things you love to do, things you don't like to do, and things you like to do with other people (or that you need to delegate) vs. things you like to do alone. Creative work often falls into that last category. For example, I have to write a press release about my new book. I can do that only when I'm alone, but after I have the first draft written, then I need to run it by someone else; I need to have someone else there. What kind of work do you like to do with someone else? Filing? Put things to be filed in a basket for your helper. Other things, like tax papers or receipts, you might want to handle yourself.

But when you're overwhelmed, it may be hard to tell the difference between when it's time to delegate and when we just need to be better organized. So remember that questions of delegation must come from an overview -- from what you see or know has to be done. Delegation comes in when you learn the difference between an overview and a detail view, and when you have a talent for switching back and forth. Delegating comes when you can sort out what you do like to do and what

you don't like to do. Then you can determine what do you have to do, and what you can give to someone else.

What's the best way to handle to-do lists?

Lists can be intimidating, so I make up to-do notes. You just take a notepad or index card (plain white -- logos or lines will distract you), and write one to-do task in the middle of the piece of paper. Take another page of the notepad and write another task. Continue on and write as many as it takes to get all your tasks down on paper.

Then tear off all those pieces of paper from the notepad and put them in a basket, where you can pick them out, one by one, and do them. I advise people not to write a to-do list on one page of paper because then big tasks and little tasks get mixed together and it'll drive you crazy.

If you have the tasks on note cards or notepad paper, you can move them around, rearranging the order of the tasks until they're all completed. It's also important to realize that all the tasks on the pieces of paper don't have to be done today. The primary cause of disorganization is unrealistic time estimates.

It seems that many of us are unable to find what we need. How can we maximize "find-ability"?

First, get your access type figured out -- Visual, Spatial or Chronological. If you are a Visual, your find-ability will be improved by using large colored labels (and by telling people to go away when they complain you have piles on your desk).

If you are a Spatial, it'll work well to have bins near your desk where you can put your projects, and then put those project bins on a shelf. That way, you can reach up and grab a bin called, for example, "balance the checkbook," and when you're done, put that bin back on the shelf. The beauty of that is that you can throw anything related to balancing the checkbook into the bin.

If you are a Chronological, you access by date and time, so you like things organized by when they have to be done. Chrons might have an accordion folder, or trays on shelves on the wall, with dates on the folders or trays that let them know when something needs to be completed.

If you're accessing anything by date, you need to set it up by date. If you're accessing it visually, you need to set it up to alert you visually. If you're accessing it spatially, you need to set it up by where you're going to reach for it.

What are the "rules" for deciding what you throw out and what to keep?

The problem with throwing things out is somebody else; that is, someone else told you that you should throw things out. Most people who have a lot of stuff have it because they like it. Don't let someone else make you feel guilty for that. I had a wonderful gal helping me in my office, and I would say, "We're going to do three more press kits and then we're going to stop." And she'd say, "No, let's just keep going. We can get it all done." She was trying to be nice, but she lasted in my office for two days because she wasn't listening, and that's death in the organizing business. So first of all, a companion does not dictate.

Then, recognize the access types and ask yourself under what circumstance will you want this again. If you're a Visual you ask, "When will I want to see this

again?" Spatial ask "When will I want to grab this again?" And Chrons ask "When will I need to use this again?"

What we're doing is changing the question because the typical question is "Why am I keeping this?" or "What do I need this for?" But when you ask that, you place yourself in a position of having to defend your possessions. On the other hand if you ask "When will I use this again?" and it's, for example, holiday decorations, the answer is "Next Christmas." Then you put it away with a label on it -- but the label doesn't say "Christmas"; it says "November." (Or it says "Look for this in November" or "Grab this in November" -- depending on your access type.)

What's your most important piece of advice about getting organized?

Respect your own work personality and access type. Then get off your own back about getting it all done in one day or one week. Expect to invest a great deal of time in getting organized.

"How to Get Organized Without Resorting to Arson" by Liz Franklin, is available from <http://www.amazon.com>.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"Successful people are always looking for opportunities to help others. Unsuccessful people are always asking, 'What's in it for me?'"

Brian Tracy

HELP SHAPE FUTURE ISSUES BY TELLING US WHAT YOU THINK

We try to pack each issue of the Health and Wealth Newsletter with information that will help you improve your life. Let us know how we're doing and what you'd like to see in future issues by sending your comments to newsletter@rexall.com. Your input will help shape future issues!
