



DECEMBER 2007

Issue No. 68

OREGON ATTORNEY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

# IN SIGHT

*for Oregon Lawyers*

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF YOUR PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

## AN OBVIOUS AND INEXPENSIVE EXERCISE

Physical exercise has such a bad rap. Despite all the hard bodies, jocks, and gym rats out there, it's probably fair to say that exactly half of those who are reading this article graduated in the bottom 50 percent of gym class. I know I did.

Perfectly valid excuses for putting off exercise abound. For one thing, there's the fear of getting hurt. You think I'm going to let someone bounce a soccer ball off my head just for kicks? Every time I think about getting on a horse, a vision of Christopher Reeve passes through my mind. For those picked last for the 10th grade volleyball team, there is the lifelong fear of failing. The stylish sports of tennis and badminton require a partner, and that means coordinating schedules. Then there's the matter of having the right stuff – the equipment, skis, tennis rackets, bicycles, clothing, magic shoes, and headgear – which cost money; or the right playing field: synchronized swimming and croquet both require certain venues.

Home exercise equipment sounded like the right solution. Having all that right at home would mean that I could exercise in the privacy of my own house, at any hour of the day or night, and no one would laugh. All of that was true enough, but before long, the treadmill and stationary recumbent bike became racks for clothing in the bedroom.

What was left – horseshoes? Competitive sleeping, power shopping, and aerobic computing?

It took me only 50 years on this planet to find a form of exercise that fit. Walking doesn't require fancy clothing, special skills or training, a partner, or even a specially designed court. And it's a skill that most of us picked up shortly after infancy and honed through repeated trips to the refrigerator. How hard can that be? To get started, the only requirement is a comfortable pair of shoes. It's

hard to look stupid walking, it's fairly safe, and it's even harder to fail.

After deciding that walking would become my exercise regimen, I established some ground rules (for the motivation that comes from breaking the rules):

- Walk no more than 20 minutes from the starting point, which means that the round trip will amount to more than a half-hour of exercise.
- Take a break on Sundays, state and federal holidays, and lunar eclipses.
- Don't eat before exercising.

Amazingly, walking has become my exercise – something I actually enjoy on a regular basis.

*This article originally appeared as "Walking – Obvious and Cheap Form of Exercise," Jennifer J. Rose, Solo, Volume 12, No. 4, Summer 2006. © 2006 by the American Bar Association. Reprinted with permission.*