Physical Fitness - Is Your Workout Missing Something?

Copyright 2005 Mike Adams Hiking along a rocky trail, two of the three friends carefully picked their way from rock to rock. But one leaped from rock to rock, bounding by the others like a gazelle running and leaping from rock to rock. Never missing his footing, the others wondered at his almost supernatural grace and skill. "How does he do that?" they thought. When most people think of physical fitness, they think of strength and cardiovascular fitness. If they are really thinking about it, they'll add flexibility to the list. But there's something few people think about when working out, a missing component of physical fitness. You can't get it just by lifting weights or running on a treadmill. The missing component is agility. Agility is what let my friend run rings around us, leaping from rock to rock along the Pedernales River in Texas. Agility is what you see in top athletes who make great skill look effortless. Agility is what helps a ballet dancer make it look effortless. Agility is how Jackie Chan can still do martial arts even while he is rolling over tables, bouncing off walls, leaping between the rungs of ladders. I didn't understand that until years after the hike along the Pedernales River. Now, after doing martial arts for almost 30 years, I understand. When you watch someone who moves with grace and skill, you're seeing agility. Have you ever had an experience where you felt clumsy? Have you ever fumbled the ball, or tripped over your own two feet? Or have you ever seen someone who is in great shape, but they just can't coordinate, they can't move? The missing component of physical fitness is agility. If you just do weights or cardio, you're not going to develop agility. If you want agility, you have to move, and you have to adapt on the fly to changing (and often intense) situations. Some sports and fitness activities promote agility more than others. For me, martial arts gave me agility. I've been dong WingTsun Kung Fu(TM) for 25 years, and martial arts in general for almost 30. I have to be able to adapt to what an opponent is doing quickly and perfectly. I have to seize the advantage, gain and maintain dynamic control. I have to stay balanced and graceful even while moving rapidly and adjusting to the changing dynamics of sparring. Many other sports really develop agility as well. Basketball, tennis, soccer, hockey, skiing, snowboarding... they all develop and require agility. If you're not doing something to develop agility, today is a good day to start. You'll be amazed at the difference increased agility will make in feeling physically fit. Before long you'll move with the grace of a cat, you'll bound like a gazelle. Don't just lift weights and do cardio - get out there and do something to increase your agility as well. Get together with some buddies for basketball. Go play some tennis. Take up martial arts. Agility will give you the ability to actually DO something with all of the physical fitness you've been developing. You will feel better and move better, and you will probably have a lot more fun than just running on a treadmill or lifting weights!

About the Author

Inspirations Personal Training Studio owner Cindy Brotherston, Personal Trainer provides personalized fitness, weight loss and nutrition.

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