**Make the best out of what you got!**

As I celebrate yet another year with a birthday celebration, I’m reminded of my life’s journey and I realize how happy I am with what I got.

Birthdays make you realize stuff like that; good things, bad things, wishes, regrets, promises. One thing that my open-heart surgery did do for me, is open my eyes and my heart to accepting my habits and not allowing them to control my life.

We all know what we do, what our weaknesses are and we all know what is good for us. If you are fat, you know you are fat! Don’t let that fatness stop you from being fit. If you smoke, you know you smoke. Don’t let those cigarettes stop you from eating healthy. If your life is under a lot of stress, you know that you are under a lot of stress. Don’t let that stress dictate unhealthy habits. You can be fat, or smoke, or be under a lot of stress and still be the best that you can be.

Don’t you think that a person who is fat and exercises is better off than a person who is fat and doesn’t exercise? (Add any body/health issue into that statement) Food for thought! Speaking of thoughts and your opinions, even those will cripple a healthy lifestyle.

The bottom line is that exercise affects it all and it affects it in a healthy way; including our opinions and thoughts!

Here’s an opinion and judgment that I recently witnessed. I was watching someone using a walker, walking through our facility in order to exercise on a recumbent bicycle.

Many of us would be too embarrassed and wouldn’t even consider entering a gym with a walker for exercise. So many people get hung up on impressions and opinions, that they cripple themselves from taking necessary steps to healing and health.

An opinion that stops you from eating better or starting exercise is no different than a bad habit and it’s crippling you.

How often have your own thoughts stopped you from doing something because of that bad habit or state of “not being perfect?” Being a victim of self judgment is the worst obstacle to overcome.

The truth is, many of us have those same thoughts, judgements and things going on in our own heads. Why are we crippling ourselves? I’d rather see someone snuff out their cigarette before coming into the gym to workout, than to not come into the gym at all. I’d rather see more stressed and overweight individuals on my treadmills, then to not see them in my facility.

No matter how bad off you think you are, no matter how many assisted living devices you use, no matter how much extra weight you carry, or how many cigarettes you smoke, or how many nights you don’t sleep well; you can make improvements and become physically better if you decide to work on it and simply get started.

When exercise makes you feel better; just maybe, you can tackle those bad habits and/or negative thought processes easier and start to overcome them. Did I mention, you’ll start feeling better too?

Don’t “chalk it up” to aging and falling apart either; like many of my birthday cards stated. Aging is a state of mind! I’ve got hundreds of examples and hours of experience with how your mind affects every aspect of aging. In fact, the best way to combat aging and debilitative issues is to change your mind about it first and then to start including daily exercise. Exercise allows you to age better, which in-turn allows you to deal with everything better.

So, it’s really about making the best of what you got! If you have a bum knee, then make the rest of your body better to protect that knee and to be able to still live the lifestyle you want. You have balance issues and need to use a walker, and then improve your balance and strength that require the use of assistance. You’re fat. You’re bald. You’re stressed. You’re too busy. You’re old. You’re you! Be the best at what you are, and exercise will help that!!