**Bringing back your happy outlook on life!**

An extremely interesting statement was shared with me after an exercise class that I had finished teaching.

“The reason I started coming to this class three years ago was because of depression and attending this class has made a world of difference in the way I feel and my attitude with dealing with what’s been going on in my life.”

Aging is one of those things that happens and with it comes a lot of changes and issues that are not wanted or necessarily enjoyed. Not only with ourselves, but also with our loved ones. The debilitation that often occurs with aging of a spouse or a parent can add unbelievable stress on us.

In this case, my friends’ spouse had completely deteriorated both physically and mentally to the point that the caretaking on every level now had to be done by my friend, his spouse, my exercise classmate.

Like all of us, my friend was also dealing with the effects of her own aging process, which was enough to handle in itself. She had little control over what was happening with her spouse. She started to feel the affect of the gradual deterioration of her spouse on herself, which made her world start spinning in ways that she had never expected.

Depression set in. This is not an uncommon phenomenon and it happens more than we know, more than our senior friends and family members will ever tell us.

So, my friend called and asked for advice about addressing a prescription from the spouse’s physician to begin physical therapy. She was worried about how they would ever get him to even consider going to therapy, because of the mental stubbornness that often happens with aging. We’ve all experienced how our friends and family members get very stuck in their own ways of behaving and thinking.

Well, we got him there.

A few weeks later, I asked how the therapy was going and if it was helping.

“I can’t believe it, there is a world of difference and not only is he feeling better, but he is now doing things that he hasn’t done in a long time. He’s happier, he’s not talking all death and dying anymore,” said my friend.

After this individual began therapy, he experienced a night of cramps and discomfort that just about derailed the therapy. He tried to quit, but with the insistence of his wife, the therapy continued. The progression of the movement and treatments is now to the point where the focus of the rehabilitation is now to continue to strengthen the body and return his mind back to the point of knowing that “I can still do things on my own and that I don’t have to be debilitated by age anymore and I feel better and happier.”

The relief that I see in the eyes of my class participant (friend) is noticeable and now she is not only exercising for her own health and care-taking abilities, the exercise is for enjoyment and social involvement.

I’m sure her depression isn’t gone completely, but it has lifted. The spouse is feeling better and able to help with daily chores again and has a much happier outlook on life again. The therapy and exercise has done wonders for the couple.

The wife has been telling me for years how much she needed our class and how therapeutic it is in ways I wouldn’t understand. But I do now, since the exercise has not only addressed her own needs, both physically and mentally, it has recently improved her spouse’s.

What most people don’t understand or see is that exercise is therapy. Physical therapy is a form of rehabilitation that focus’ on getting your body back to being physical again, whether it’s from an accident, an injury, a genetic condition or from the aging process. Physical means movement and movement means exercise.

There are many modalities and helpful treatments that come along with physical therapy, but the bottom line is to reduce pain in joints and areas of debilitation and to get the body back into moving again. And exercise as therapy works miracles not only on the body but equally on the mind, building confidence, improving depression, and bringing back a happy outlook on life.