**Ammunition against the gravity storm**

“Every single day the sun rises and at night it falls. We’re designed to have 24-hour rhythms in our physiology and metabolism. These rhythms exist because our brains need to go to sleep each night to repair, reset and rejuvenate and every organ needs to have down time to repair and reset as well.” Says Satchin Panda, a professor at the Salk Institute and an expert on circadian rhythms, in his book “The Circadian Code.”

“One of my co-workers at work said, “there seemed to be a gravity storm last night,” after a long evening of providing assistance for an unusual number of falls one evening. Most of the assists were simply helping individuals get up in their own homes, an issue that puts a little worry into my own thoughts of aging. It’s also a motivation to keep my exercise program working against future gravity storms in my life.

The benefits of exercise are endless and what exercise provides for the aging process is the difference between fighting that gravity storm or not. I’m flooded with memories of my grandfather who lived into his mid-90s who had crippled himself into full assisted living, for no other reason than lack of strength. It was so hard to watch him deteriorate those last “years” of his life, knowing that if he’d kept up his walking and active lifestyle he would have had a better end to his life.

I italicized “years” because research has shown that individuals who do not exercise or stay active could live an average of 10 “years” in an assisted living state. That’s 10 “years” of someone taking care of you and being in charge of your life, including being picked up after a gravity storm.

Compare this to individuals who are “active;” defined as keeping active through travel, gardening, weekend hikes and social groups but not involved with a permanent regular exercise routine. Active individuals tend to reduce assisted living time to three years, which is better than 10 years.

What really makes the difference and supported by research from all around the world with years and years of documented outcomes is that individuals who participate in a structured exercise routine for most of their lives, live in a state of assisted living for only three months. Let me italicize that “three months!”

What does exercising today help you with for tomorrow?

Function. I am talking about the functioning of your body. You want to keep your body strong so that you can carry in your own groceries, you can move a chair for your own convenience and you can get yourself up when fallen. Is this a lot to ask for? If you want to stay functional, you must keep your muscles, joints and movement patterns strong. There is absolutely no other way around it.

Independence. Keeping your body and mind strong is the best way to maintain an independent lifestyle. Exercise not only provides you the physical benefits for independent living it also helps keep your mind sharp, your reflexes responsive and your energy up.

Ammunition. I’m talking about ammunition to fight the aging process more affectively. When your body is primed with a consistent and effective exercise program, you can fight off (or handle) many of the aging issues that creep up on you better. Things like diabetes, heart disease, gout, cataracts, broken bones (etc). Being stronger, both skeletally and cardiovascularly so that when an accident or issue arises they allow for a much stronger fight and quicker recovery.

Benefits. Exercise allows you to enjoy so many of the benefits that make life so much better. You will sleep better, handle stress better, digest your food better and enjoy long walks with your grandkids.

Exercising for gravity storms and aging is as simple as three and a half hours a week. That’s all it takes to maintain fitness benefits for health and life. The time must be broken down into three categories: Strength training for the entire body at least two times per week, Cardiovascular training for the heart, lungs and circulation at least 3-5 times a week (20 minutes) and Flexibility for the joints at least three times per week. That’s it! Doing this kind of exercise routine, on a regular basis, will allow you to age well and fight the gravity storms of life. v

I know that I do not want to ever live in a full care assisted living facility, nor be dependent on my family and friends. So, if the research is true and we all know that gravity storms will always occur, then I better get my butt into the gym and continue building ammunition against aging.