

Evelyn Waite - A Pain in the Neck



It started with a pain in my neck and a visit to my doctor, Dr. Jerry Thomas, to get a spinal adjustment. During the treatment he told me to turn my head, which I did—as far as I could turn it. He was alarmed and marched me straight across the hall from his office to have x-rays done. The x-rays revealed that two discs in my neck were fused (probably from birth, he said), and they revealed that I was beginning to have arthritis in my spine.

Having never been very physically flexible, I knew that arthritis can rob one of much flexibility as it progresses. When I was growing up, phys-ed classes for girls were more punishment than anything else. About all we ever did was calisthenics. Our small rural school in the southwest only had team sports for boys—basketball, baseball and track. There were no team sports for girls. My only “sport” was horseback riding, which doesn’t exactly help with flexibility.

Now a dilemma loomed for me—I did not want to lose the flexibility I had, so I announced to my husband that I planned to sign up for water aerobics. We were about to leave for vacation, so I told him I would start when we returned. He probably didn’t believe I would actually go through with signing up, much less stick with it. He was right to be skeptical because I had never yet stuck to any exercise program in my entire life, and he also knew that I am not a water person.

Vessell’s offered water aerobics, which was then held at Zeno’s pool. At first, I went once a week, then twice a week and soon I was going three times a week. I thoroughly enjoyed the classes, and after a few weeks, I found that I was more flexible than I had ever been in my life! Water aerobics continues to be my favorite exercise program, and I hope they will always be available.

In addition to the need for water aerobics, I found out about a year ago that I have a number of food allergies. I was already doing a floor version of step aerobics (the steps caused knee problems, so I did them on the floor), and I continued doing them for over a year. With the new allergy diet regimen weight began literally to fall off me. At times I was alarmed because it was coming off much faster than I was comfortable with, but the weight loss eventually stabilized. Now I have learned that I am beginning to have some bone loss, so I am trying to do as much higher impact exercise as I can.

The combination of water aerobics, allergy diet and walking now keeps me feeling much healthier and more fit than I have in quite a few years. I am grateful to Vessell’s for their dedication to fitness and for providing programs that fit even the un-athletic people like me.