Challenge Tip #2: Flexibility

Flexibility is the act of moving your body through its range of motion. As we get older, we start to lose our ability of flexibility because we don’t practice it enough. Now, I’m not just talking about stretching before and after workouts; however, that is a very important element of any fitness regimen. I’m referring to the natural movements our bodies were designed to perform.

A simple flexibility movement is trunk rotation. Standing with feet hip width apart and hands on hips, elbows out, start by leaning the upper body to the right. Keep the lower body stable. Rotate trunk from right, back, left, front. Then, switch directions. “Popping” or “cracking” is common and very healthy. The sound is the air trapped between the joints and vertebrae being released. However, be mindful that you experience no severe pain afterward.

Okay, here’s a hint to help you increase your flexibility on the next fitness test. Toe touches (don’t laugh! Everyone can do them with some practice) or forward fold is one of the essential yoga poses I teach because it warms up the body for the more difficult poses to come sequentially. Start with feet hip width apart. Inhale as you circle the arms above the head and exhale as you swan dive forward to forward fold. Now, we deepen. Inhale and bend the knees, lift the chin and place the hands on the floor palms down. Exhale as you lift the hips up, tucking the chin to the chest and trying to straighten the legs without taking the hands off the floor. This is challenging at first, but I guarantee with some practice, you will be able to do it successfully!!