



# LIFE FITNESS NEWS

Fitness Inspiration | Body Awareness | SMR Update

## Newsletter

- Improve Fitness with Body Awareness.
- A new series of SMR classes.
- SMR class schedule.
- Fitness Inspiration.
- FREE Reward Points

## Birthdays


*A Very Happy Birthday* to a couple of our own:

**Blake - Mar 30**

**Joy - Mar 31**

## Member Update

We're busy making plans for our big 2-year anniversary. To kick-off the celebration though, we're going to give 50 FREE rewards points to anyone who adds their birthday-date to their profile during the month of March. Once you update, send us a quick email, and we'll add your points. Yep, it's that easy! Plus, you know you get a 100 FREE points on your birthday.

What can we say? We  our members.



## Improve Fitness with Body Awareness

As a member of **Agile 4 Life Fitness** you often hear us say, "Listen to your body." So what does that really mean and why does that matter?

Most people equate "listening to their body" to "how am I feeling." And the way we "feel" is generally associated with our energy levels. The thing about energy levels is they are affected by all sorts of factors. There's quality and quantity of sleep, daily food and beverage intake, activity levels, mental status, chronic or acute pain, joint and/or muscle tightness, medications, acute illness, hormone levels, fatigue or having a chronic disease. Any one of these factors or combination, can cause decreased energy levels.

This perception and understanding of how we "feel" is also known as body awareness. We actually all have it to some extent. Just in varying degrees. Having body awareness helps us understand our daily needs. It can tell us when to eat, sleep, or drink. But body awareness can also reveal pain or emotional distress. Science has shown that an understanding of how your body is communicating with you can actually lead to better health and emotional satisfaction.

If body awareness can lead to greater health, then you may be thinking — how can you reap the benefits? Well, if you've been keeping up your fitness routine, congratulations! You're on the right path. Physical activity is an excellent way to increase body awareness.

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## SMR Schedule

- **Fri Mar 4th:** Introduction to SMR
- **Mon Mar 7th:** Ankle Movements
- **Fri Mar 11th:** Knee Movements
- **Mon Mar 14th:** Hip Movements
- **Fri Mar 18th:** Spinal Movements
- **Mon Mar 21st:** Neck Movements
- **Fri Mar 25th:** Shoulder Movements
- **Mon Mar 28th:** Scapula Movements
- **Fri Apr 1st:** Elbow Movements
- **Mon Apr 4th:** Wrist Movements

**Recommended equipment:**  
SOFT foam roller, SOFT massage ball roller and a strap for stretching.

*(Blake believes that those over 50 should not use hard foam rollers.)*

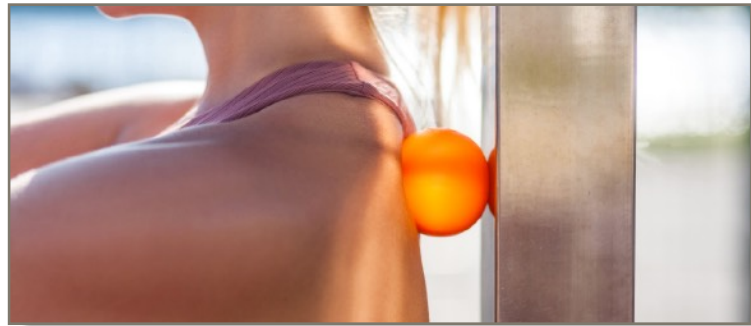
If you need or order equipment, we recommend the OPTP Soft Foam Roller (36" or 18"), OPTP Pinky Ball, and OPTP Stretch Out Strap.

## Fitness Inspiration

The internet is loaded with fantastic stories of seniors who are discovering — it's never too late. Meet Joan MacDonald, the latest internet fitness inspiration. She started a life changing journey when she was 70 and now at 73 she looks years younger. Check out her story and then start planning your next great adventure.

[Click here for a before and after pic.](#)

[Click here for her story.](#)



## SMR Series to Begin Again

We are happy to announce, the Self-Myofascial Release (SMR) class series, will begin again on **Friday, March 4th**. In general, SMR addresses muscle stiffness and referred pain that comes from contracted muscles. Relaxing these muscles helps improve blood and lymphatic circulation, thus stimulating the stretch reflex in the muscles.

*Participants of the first series described the class as being "important," "inspiring," and "insightful." They all said they learned so much about their own bodies. And they were surprised to discover all the places they felt soreness and how wonderful it was to find relief.*

Each SMR series teaches you how to identify and release muscle adhesions (knots) and muscle imbalances (tight muscles). Failure to address these issues often alter your ability to control movements and limits your range-of-motion. In turn, it can effect your posture and all primal movements: walking, squatting, lunging, hinging, twisting, pushing and pulling. Thus, hindering the way you walk, sit, stand, carry things, open and close things, get in an out of a car, do dishes, balance while moving, etc.

In class, you'll learn the muscle anatomy for every major moveable joint from ankles to wrists. And because it's important to roll out sore or stiff muscles in the proper direction, you'll learn how to foam roll or ball roll properly. You'll also learn the active and static stretches that help you become more limber. Releasing muscles is an essential step in our **Age Well Training Method** for a good warm-up and cool-down. And with consistency, in just days or weeks, you can find real relief. Please note, the length of time for relief can vary depending on how long an adhesion or full muscle stiffness has limited your movements.

Classes are **Mondays and Fridays @ 9:00am**. The first 15 minutes is the anatomy presentation. This is followed by a demonstration. Then, you'll practice on yourself.

See the class schedule and equipment recommendations in the left-hand column at the top of the page.

*(Improve Fitness with Body Awareness, continued from page 1)*

Especially activities like Yoga, Tai Chi, balance and core training, walking backwards, and resistance training. (Do any of these examples look familiar?) Also, various forms of meditation, controlled breathing techniques, guided imagery, body scan meditation and repetitive prayer can improve body awareness.

But let's get back to pain awareness. If you're like many adults over the age of 60, you are probably aware of having pain somewhere. And it can be due to a variety of reasons. It can be caused from arthritis, an old injury, a new injury, joint or muscle misalignment or tightness, degeneration, a birth defect or an auto-immune disorder. And I think I'm pretty safe to say most people find these ailments and the pain they bring to be a nuisance.

If we step back and focus on body awareness though, isn't pain really just the perfect way for your body to check-in and get your attention? Because if you are focusing on your body awareness, that pain can help you make better choices as you go through your day. With a practiced mind/body connection you can start doing a better job of setting the tempo, the duration, or the intensity of each day. The goal is of course, to lessen the pain and protect the body.

And yes, pain is not the only sensation you might be feeling. You could be feeling weakness, having trouble balancing, dizziness, fatigue, a racing heart, muscle spasms, shortness of breath, low mood or tiredness. These are all cues your body could be sending and asking you to acknowledge. And it's doing so, I'm sure, in hopes of having a two-way conversation!

That's why in all our classes, we continually give helpful cues and guidance. It's also the reason we give so many modifications. It's our effort to help you learn and connect your mind and body. And it's been proven to be the best way to prevent new injuries, new aches or pains, and obtain greater health.

Here are our top 10 recommendations to help promote body awareness:

1. Let the pain guide you — if it gets worse STOP.
2. Know your limitations — challenge yourself — but don't over do it.
3. Don't lift too heavy — if you can't keep proper form — then it's too heavy.
4. Slow down your movements — concentrate on feeling the muscles move.
5. Stay focused — don't get distracted and lose form.
6. Keep it balanced — don't let the weak side stay weak.
7. Always watch the twisting — keep it controlled.
8. Work on your range-of-motion — but don't overextend.
9. It's okay to take a rest — take it when you need it.
10. And if it helps — close your eyes, focus on your breathing — and listen to your body!

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*If you have any topic(s) you'd like us to highlight in the monthly **4 Life Fitness News**, please don't hesitate to send us an email. We love hearing from our members.*

**Please share our newsletter with your friends or family.**