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MAKING TIME STAND STILL,

Why bother getting dressed? I can remain in PJ's (or even stay in undies or nude) while carefully scanning the on-line schedule to plan my week. Eyeballing the computer, I immediately cull any class choices that include the words: "May include floorwork," "cardio" or starts at "7:30 am."

"Floorwork" is unlikely because while I can get down, I cannot rise in the allotted 45 minutes. Just the scary word "cardio" starts my heart pounding, and a 7:30 am beginning is actually in Eastern time, making it 6:30 am in my zone -- far too early.

This still leaves ample choices for a lazy, late riser. For example, I seek the word "Gold" because it signifies perfect activities for an aging audience, although it is startling when the word Zumba **Gold** is advertised under classes offered by **SilverSneakers**. Why do metals signify senior citizens -- are both considered "precious?" Or is it for hardening of the arteries? Anyhow, do not look for copper, bronze or tin to signify us, and certainly not the speed of mercury.

I also love the words "beginner" as in Beginner Zumba or Beginner Tai Chi or even Beginner Yoga -- although "Chair" Yoga is another possibility. I might consider "intermediate" but only if beginner is not offered. "Classic Light" is another neat euphemism. I am frightened by titles such as "Boot Camp," "Boom Mind," "EnerChi" or anything else that offers a "Mix." I also refuse to meditate! Meditation is what I do during TV commercials.

As a dilettante, I am surfing SilverSneakers -- free for senior citizens, zoomed live online, and have learned that you can call any of their activities by any name -- and no matter what the title -- it is still the same thing -- that dreaded word: Exercise.

All the sessions have marching.... All have stepping side to side, or front to back.... All have raising arms -- up, out, sideways, and back.... All have squats and lunges.... All have rise and lower on tiptoes and stand on one foot like a flamingo (for balance classes).... All have us twisting around to see what is behind us... (usually a blank wall), and all start slowly (giving a false sense of accomplishment) and gather in intensity (as we begin to gasp and sit down or collapse).

All have very friendly, gorgeous instructors (mostly shapely females with an occasional brawny male), especially trained to work with seniors. You meet them casually -- on a first name basis -- Damaris, Andi, Sharlyn, Jenny, Stephanie, and others -- who continually offer a barrage of words in an unending stream of description and encouragement, filled with vivid images such as "parting the horse's mane" for one of the (beginning) Tai Chi hand movements.

There is no way to do anything wrong -- only more or less effectively.

The permissions include: "You need not go at my pace, go at your own." "If you can't do this standing, sit down." "If anything hurts, stop doing it."

So – what are the differences between the variedly-named sessions? Toys – some use balls, tubing, and weights... Some have no toys... Some have chairs.... Some don't have chairs.... Some have music.... some operate at a breathlessly quick pace; others are agonizingly slow and measured. In any given day there are usually five to ten dazzling choices.

As far as music -- I really only enjoy three kinds: Marching Band, Latin American and Cantorial. We march in place or back and forward; we mambo and cha-cha in Zumba, but I and cannot find anything for Cantorial. to enhance. Perhaps I might start my own classes in a Yeshiva and count and check for effective breathing as we sway while “davening” in prayer.

Confession: I cannot do everything the instructor introduces during the 45- minute sessions. In fact, I have a new policy: in Beginning Zumba, for example, I perform every second dance. Or –if being completely honest – about 75-85 percent of every second dance.

Second confession -- although this is SilverSneakers and they recommend wearing sneakers, I do everything (or don't do everything) barefoot because I have not donned shoes since March – unless I leave the house (rarely). It may be a Freudian slip that I often call this Silver Slippers – Oh, to be a Cinderella!

Third confession – If the telephone or doorbell rings during a session, I DO answer it and do not rush the caller to conclude the message. I regard all interruptions as divine intervention.

Fourth confession – I would NEVER do this if they could see me – donning clothes only every other day to get the mail and packages from Amazon.

For those who want information without physical involvement, SilverSneakers offers videos to watch and articles to read -- on stability, on lifting and carrying safely, on easing common pains, on building strength and flexibility. No question as to the benefits of this – all a matter of making it palatable (without adding snacks to the routines).

Stuck here in the pandemic frozen north, I am unable to swim, seldom, if ever, walk, and ride a stationery exercycle only while watching Jeopardy. Every Sunday, I examine the upcoming week, line up choices to enter on my android phone calendar and – avoiding conflicts - pick one activity for each weekday.

Weekends are for recuperation, recovery and brand-new resolutions.

However, if you ever wanted to conquer time, it is now possible to make it stand still. Do not look at the clock for at least 20 minutes of exercise. Now, look and you will see that exactly six minutes have actually passed! (Maybe less,)

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