

# Understanding Yourself

## Peer Pressure Can Be Good For Your Health

(NAPSA)—There's good news, bad news and better news about fitness for older Americans.

**The good news** is that just as peer pressure can affect how you act when you're young, it can encourage adults to stick to their exercise regimen. That's important, since the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says every week, older adults need at least:

- 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity (brisk walking), 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic activity (jogging or running) or a combination of both; and

- muscle-strengthening activities on two or more days that work all major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders and arms).

**The bad news**, according to an AARP survey, is that more than six in 10 adults aged 45 and older say they exercise less than they did five years ago.

**The better news** is that in order to encourage older Americans to live healthier lives, AARP provides free support to anyone interested in becoming a "Fitness Ambassador" by starting a walking program. Fitness Ambassadors are everyday people, such as retirees and others interested in health and fitness. One such is Cathy Nemerovski. While exercise has always been an integral part of her life, she didn't train to become a gym instructor until her 50s. A year ago, a broken foot forced her to re-evaluate her exercise regimen.

"I had just turned 60 and because of my injury, I had gotten a glimpse into what it would be like to be getting older and having your body change. So I decided I wanted to focus my teaching on seniors."



**You can learn how to help other adults as well as yourself be fit and healthy.**

As a Fitness Ambassador, Nemerovski organizes weekly educational sessions and walks, and provides information, opportunities and incentive to older adults to get moving and healthy.

"I find if you're evolving as a person as you're doing something for others, you're on a journey together. My students give me way more than I give them. It's a wonderful experience."

Fitness Ambassadors get training and support from the Lifelong Fitness Alliance, an organization that seeks to bridge the gap between knowledge and action when it comes to fitness and healthy living. Lifelong Fitness Alliance staff are available to counsel Fitness Ambassadors about the progress, challenges and needs of their group.

"This gives me the perfect platform to help people," said Nemerovski. "I really enjoy inspiring people to make changes in their lives. Walking is something everyone can do."

If you want to make a personal commitment to improve fitness for midlife and older adults, contact [step@lifelongfitnessalliance.org](mailto:step@lifelongfitnessalliance.org) or call (650) 361-8282 for more information.