

Lyrical



## Exercise?

Some people think that regular exercise is good for you. These people would have you believe that the more you exercise, the longer your life will be. You'll be thinner, you'll have more energy, and you'll be a magnet for the ladies, or the guys, or whatever you prefer. Why, you might even live forever. You're sold, right? Well, allow me to rain on the parade...

When you exercise, you get your body in shape, you get your muscles strong, and you release stress... They say. A healthy lifestyle with regular exercise can be beneficial for some, but the truth is what's good for one person, might not be good for another. The *crème de la crème*, though, is this: Everyone dies. Senior weight lifters who sell juicers, to Herculean body builders will die. It's the one thing we're all born to do, and the one thing that we all get right.

I have a friend who obsesses on his exercise and what he eats. Running until he pukes, eating cardboard flavored health food, and obsessing on his physique. Is that what life is, though? Every second we're alive is a blessing, every breath we take bringing us closer and closer to our sweet reward, but here's this guy, counting calories and eating something about as delectable as a sandal. Is that the price of the immortality this lifestyle offers us?

Now, you'd think my friend who works out a lot would be stress free, since exercise helps decrease stress. If not stress free, perhaps more adept at coping with the many problems one faces in this adventure called Life. Sorry, old chum. I'm afraid not. I'm sorry to say that this feller has Biblical freak outs.

The truth is exercise helps you stay in shape, but with hereditary diseases, cancers, and all the uncertainties in life, it's more important to just stop and enjoy breathing every once in a while. Better yet, stop and eat a cheeseburger. I maintain that you can't ever really say you've lived life to its fullest until you've sunk your teeth into charred mammal flesh covered in gooey cheese,

smacked between two pieces of bread, but I digress.

Back on track! What these diet gurus with perfectly sculpted abs fail to tell us in their infomercials is that genetics play more of a role in our life-spans and our physical appearance than who runs sixteen miles or who can bench-press an Escalade. No amount of exercise can save you from the Reaper. Run as fast as you can; the Reaper can run faster.

In the final analysis, I say exercise... some. Yeah, I said exercise some! It'll make your life healthier for sure, but like fast food, or sugary snacks – all things in moderation. Even too much exercise can be a bad thing. Life is about living. Enjoy every second that's given to you. Some of us are given eighty years to enjoy it, others no time at all. Life is a precious gift, too important to spend every waking minute cramped up in a sweaty gym, or eating chemically enhanced protein nibs.

Until next time, live, eat, drink, and be merry! You might just live to see pigs fly, and with the genetics of today, that may be sooner than you think. Or you might not make it to the end of this sentence. The ball's in your court. Cheers!

~ *Christopher Meier*

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## My Closet

I don't know what to wear  
When I have to go somewhere.  
When the sun comes up  
Another challenge fills my cup.  
During the day, so many things to do;  
Go to work, go to school.  
Before I make a move,  
What colors will I choose?  
Red, yellow, blue, or green,  
Find something that makes me seen.  
After I find something good to wear,  
I think about my shoes... which pair?  
After three minutes in the closet,  
I feel terribly exhausted.  
But I won't fear  
I'm in a good mood here.

Working all day  
Listening to my boss,  
He's a pain in the neck  
And I'm ready to get lost.  
I'm finally at home enjoying my family,  
Time with those I love so dearly.  
My husband and kids,  
My cat and my dog;  
I must say out loud  
Oh, thank you, Lord.

Now it's time to rest.  
My head on the pillow is the best.  
I sleep well all night,  
But when I open my eyes, the closet is my first sight.  
Oh, here we go again....  
I don't know what to wear  
When I have to go somewhere!

~ Juan Leyria

**Limerick**

There was an old lady named Ruth,  
Who sat in the corner booth.  
She had a bad pain,  
That drove her insane.  
Turned out it was a bad tooth.

*~ Dave Humphries*

## The Wasp

Any change in your life should be progress is stated in a Romanian proverb. I thought of how exciting it would be for me if I change my residence location to another one that is more advanced, more civilized, and with a variety of cultures. This could be America.

I had some experience moving from one place to another. I had moved from Moldova (over a hundred kilometers from Bucharest) to Bucharest. It was 1954. Now, in 1985, I changed my country to America. As a refugee, I came to be with new people, a new life, and a new start.

Youngstown is the city where I started a new life. I had no car, no job, no friends ... nothing! I couldn't communicate at all, only "excuse me" and "OK" but nothing else in this new language. From the north side of Youngstown to downtown was too far to walk. I took the bus. I wanted to see my new city. The bus was crowded, and there was no seat for me. Emotionally I wanted to speak to people, to say, "Hey, listen to me, I am new here. I am Grigore and I came here two days ago from far away to live with you. Do you accept me? I am a good man and I have a family." I wanted to speak but I couldn't. I needed something to attract these people who were young and old, men and women, and black and white. Soon this "something" came instantly ... it was a wasp!

Just after three bus stops as the driver opened the door for people to come in and get out, a small intruder came inside. It was a wasp! All of us were agitated and trying to avoid being stung by this little creature. The driver stopped the bus. Only one person was trying to catch the ugly dangerous insect and that person was me!

With a piece of tissue from my pocket I followed the wasp everywhere it flew. I kept bumping people on the bus. I was saying, "Excuse me, OK? Excuse me, OK?" Finally, I got it. I caught the wasp and threw it away. The reward was wonderful. People

were talking to me! I didn't understand them but I answered by saying, "Grigore from Romania" again and again. It was a beautiful evening in November of 1985.

~ Gregory Fesko



## Like Coffee

Smooth but strong  
My emotions are the flavors  
That come from deep within the bean  
My soul screams white like the cream  
In my coffee bursting with Colombian steam  
Hot with the heat of my anger  
Double dip of chocolate  
To top off the caffeine  
Keep my spirit high  
Like the sugar I claim  
The spoon of life stirs me up  
Like Maxwell House, I was good to the last drop in my cup

*~ Marketa Slaughter*

## **Sports: Great Exercise, but Are They as Fun to Watch?**

My name is Corne Eksteen, and I'm from South Africa. I have been living in Cincinnati, Ohio, for four months because I am an au pair. In South Africa there are a variety of sports, but America has more, like basketball. I recently experienced my first time watching a basketball game live in a basketball arena.

It was a cold, wet Sunday morning as I looked out of the window, but I was still excited to go and watch the Louisville/Cincinnati basketball game. After a warm shower, I walked to the kitchen to get myself a bowl of cereal while I was waiting for the time to pass, until we were supposed to leave for the game.

As it was raining down on the cars, the wipers cleared my vision to see all the sports fields of the University of Louisville, and I realized we were almost there. When we got to the basketball arena called Freedom Hall, there were only a few cars, but that didn't surprise me. Normally the parking area would be full of cars with fans tailgating – barbecuing before the game. The rain, however, didn't make that possible with everybody just getting out of their cars and running to the Freedom Hall to evade the rain. While we were standing outside waiting for the doors to open, I realized that everybody was wearing fan apparel of their respective teams.

When the doors opened, there was a tall young man standing at the door, scanning our tickets before we were allowed to enter the stadium. After the young man scanned my ticket, I walked through the doors, overwhelmed to see what you can do and what you can buy to support your team. While we were walking around the stadium looking for our seats, I observed all the people around me. Everybody looked so happy, laughing, and having a good time with friends and family, giving me a warm feeling inside.

When we found our seats, we sat down and waited for the clock to count down – thirty minutes until the game started. While the clock was counting down, both teams were busy warming up on the court. As it got closer to tipoff time, we sang the National Anthem and the lights went off with only one spotlight on the court where the players were standing. The music started to play, and one loud voice introduced the team to the crowd. That was unbelievable.

The whistle blew and the game started. Everybody went crazy as the team scored its first goal. With the first time-out, the cheerleaders and the card girls danced with the band playing in the background, while the teams had their team talk. After the time-out, the game went on at the same place where it stopped before the time-out. The crowd started to scream “defense, defense!” I thought to myself that it was so worth it, to wake up early on a rainy Sunday morning, to stand in a line to get into the arena, to get a drink, to go to the restroom, and to sit next to a total stranger.

The best part was yet to come. During half time they honored a few people who had season tickets for over forty years. Now isn't that a good reason why sports is not just good exercise, but also fun to watch?

~ Corne Eksteen

