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ENOTE #7 – The Brain – 19 May 2009

I have recently done some reading about the brain and have found it inspiring to learn the reasons that exercise provides us with more mental clarity and decisiveness.

In the book, 'SPARK: The Revolutionary New Science of Exercise and The Brain', Dr. John Ratey goes into detail about how exercise affects our brains. Here are some of the key points:

1. Aerobic exercise addresses attention, impulse control, learning and memory areas of our brains.

2. Aerobic exercise improves the environment in our brain by creating good neurtotransmitters, hormones, and growth factors. This makes the brain cells more ready to do their job.

3. Consistent aerobic exercise creates new brain cells in our centre for learning and memory.

4. Studies have been conducted with students at Naperville Central High School west of Chicago. What has been found is that, with specific regular daily aerobic exercise, the students are more focused, less fidgety, have fewer behavioral issues, and get better marks.

A teacher at City Park School in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, has now taken her insights from this book and applied it with her students. She has seen the same amazing results. View more info from this and from Dr. John Ratey at CBC.

Ironically, at the same time that I was reading SPARK, I had a medical appointment. That day, the Doctors were handing out prescriptions for pedometers. On the container the pedometer came in, it says: "Physical Activity … the most powerful medicine. For best results, use daily!"

Exercise is great for both our bodies … and our minds.

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