

Each Calander Year Our Bodies and Minds Want to Age

Aging happens when we quit moving. Keep moving is one of the best things we can do for our health as we age. The SWELL exercise program is a great way for older adults to stay active and improve their overall health. It is a comprehensive program that includes a variety of exercises to improve strength, flexibility, balance, and coordination.

SWELL members are seeing results, and their physicians are impressed with their progress. It is inspiring to know that SWELL is helping people to get younger and improve their health. It is a great way to stay active and physically healthy as we age.

What about our brain health?

The article “How the aging Brain affects Thinking”. This article cites research from the National Institute on Aging (NIA) on the effects of aging on the brain, as well as research on cognitive super agers. The article also discusses the benefits of meditation for cognitive health, citing research from the Mayo Clinic.

Overall, the article makes a strong case for the importance of meditation for cognitive health. It provides evidence that meditation can help to improve mood, sleep, memory, concentration, stress management, self-awareness, and emotional regulation. It also cites research that suggests that meditation can help to reduce the risk of developing dementia.

Here is a summary of the key points from the article:

The aging brain becomes slower to find words and recall names, has problems with multitasking, and experiences mild decreases in the ability to pay attention.

Some older adults may find that they don't do as well as younger individuals on complex memory or learning tasks. Cognitive super agers are people in their 80s, 90s, and beyond who have memory performance comparable to people 20 to 30 years younger.

Exercise is one of the best things we can do for our physical health, and it can also help to improve our cognitive function.

Meditation is a great way to keep our minds healthy. It has been shown to reduce stress, improve sleep quality, and boost cognitive function.

Specific benefits of meditation for cognitive function:

- Increased focus and concentration
- Improved memory
- Increased creativity
- Reduced anxiety and depression
- Increased self-awareness
- Improved ability to manage stress.

How to get started with meditation:



There are many different types of meditation, but **Tension Zen meditation produced by Professor Gary Wittman** uses the best of 4 different types of meditation to help you with all areas of mental well-being.

Tension Zen meditation has 6 experiences that begin with guided meditation, involving listening to a recording that guides you through the meditation process and gradually allows you to take more control during the later experiences.

Conclusion:

Meditation is a simple and effective way to keep your mind healthy as you age. It is a practice that can be enjoyed by

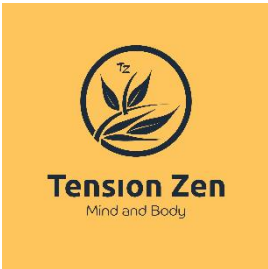
people of all ages and fitness levels. If you are new to meditation, start with **Tension Zen** a few minutes each day and gradually increase the amount of time you meditate as you become more comfortable and move through the **Tension Zen** experiences.

Scientists and Experts, National Institute on Aging (June 27, 2023). (How the aging Brain affects Thinking) Retrieved October 6, 2023. NIA scientists and other experts review this content to ensure it is accurate and up to date.

Dana Sparks, Journalists The Register-Guard (August 7, 2019). (Mayo Meditation is good medicine) Retrieved July 18, 2023.

--Gary Wittman

Patreon Website and App Links:



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The phone Apps below will help you install the App suited for your type of phone. You can download the app for iPhone or Android and use Tension Zen meditation anywhere. I personally have downloaded the Patreon App on my phone and use it in my meditation classes and at home to meditate.

iPhone App: <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/patreon/id1044456188>

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Last chance to order SWELL or Tension Zen Mind and Body clothing until October of 2024 !!!!!!!

Click on this link to view and order.

<https://stores.district20supply.com/udswell/shop/home>

I will pick up orders so check pick-up, don't have it delivered to you.

The plank, what's it good for?

Dr. Michael Roizen, chief wellness officer emeritus at the Cleveland Clinic, published an article titled "The most effective exercise for reducing blood pressure." In the article, he states that 50% of all adults and 83% of adults over 85 in America have high blood pressure. He also points out that 34 million Americans need to take medication to lower their blood pressure but are not doing so.



Dr.

Roizen recommends isometric exercise as one of the best exercises for blood pressure. A study published in JAMA found that isometric exercise is more effective than aerobic exercise in lowering blood pressure. Isometric exercises are those in which you hold a static position for a period of time, such as planks, pelvic tilts, and static stretches. In the near future we will be adding Kung Fu tai chi that will add more static positions to SWELL class. You will be holding your muscles in a state of contraction for a period of time, not moving. Isometric exercises were 98% effective and aerobic exercise only 40.5% in lowering blood pressure.

Health pioneer Michael Roizen, M.D., is chief wellness officer emeritus at the Cleveland Clinic and author of four No. 1 New York Times bestsellers. Check out his latest, “The Great Age Reboot: Cracking the Longevity Code for a Younger Tomorrow,” and find out more at www.longevityplaybook.com.

Michael Roizen, M.D., King Features (September 20, 2023). (The most effective exercise for reducing blood pressure) Retrieved July 18, 2023.

--Gary Wittman

Patty Clefisch

I am brand new to the SWELL program, started in September and I LOVE it!

My husband and I have been married for 36 years. We have lived in Grinnell, Iowa, Iron Mountain, Michigan, and the Dubuque area. We live on a hill between Balltown and Sherrill overlooking the Mississippi river valley with beautiful views and spectacular sunrises. We have 6 children (3 of mine, 2 of his and 1 of ours) and 12 grandchildren. We are empty nesters with the kids and grandkids currently living in Iowa, Wisconsin, Colorado, and Arizona. We have had many pets and animals but currently have none; other than the deer, racoons, possums, squirrels and chipmunks that visit us regularly.

My education includes Wartburg College, Wisconsin University and Kirkwood Community College. I have been a Director of Medical Records/Health Information Management/HIPPA for 25 years at 3 different hospitals. The last 10 years was at Finley Hospital in Dubuque. I then worked another 10 years in computerized medical records software development for McKesson also in Dubuque. My career started with electronic typewriters and ended with computer software.

I retired in 2016 and started to do some traveling.

First was the Grand Canyon. Then a girl’s trip to New York with my daughters.

Patty Clefisch



A fishing trip to Oregon



A bus tour of Costa Rica



Travel was interrupted by the pandemic and healthcare needs.

Eventually we were able to continue with camping trips out west including the Arches in Utah, Yellowstone, Rocky



Mountains, Grand Tetons, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and annual trips to Colorado to visit the 2 families that live near Colorado Springs.



I also visit friends in Sarasota, Florida when possible. I enjoy spending time boating on the river with my husband, he fishes, and I read. I enjoy hiking, visiting the kids and grandkids. I also enjoy reading, sewing, crocheting and online puzzles. I am trying to enjoy yard work, but... Trying to stay healthy and keeping up with our healthcare needs.

Following retirement some of the friends I would meet with to walk moved to Florida and Arizona. I started mall walking then and began searching for an exercise program for people in my age group. I discovered SWELL from an article in the TH and signed up for the waiting list and here I am! I really enjoy the variety of exercises and meeting new people. Of interest is the fact that I have been a breast cancer survivor since 2019 thanks to early detection with digital mammography.

Mary Jane Driscoll



I am new to Swell - two weeks after being on the wait list for 1 & 1/2 years. Yeah!!! I am enjoying the variety of exercises, intro to Tai Chi, reuniting with many people and making new friends. Everyone at Swell has been very welcoming and positive. I love the social aspect of this community. I grew up in a family of 11 siblings (middle child) on a dairy/ hog farm just outside Cascade Iowa. Attended St Mary's catholic grade school and Aquin High School (class '73) in



Cascade then graduated with BS Nursing from Marycrest College (77). My professional career as nurse consisted of 30 years at Mercy Hospital, clinical nurse supervisor instrumental in opening Crescent Community Health Center before moving onto role as a Disability Clinical Specialist for Sedgwick for 10 years. I am married to Dan Driscoll of 46 years. As of Feb, this year, we are now adjusting to being retired together. We have 3 children: Michelle (married to Jeff Vogler) who has 3 sons - Colin (11) Hudson (9) & Bennett (7) in Dubuque; Tom (Kara, girlfriend) in Portland, Tn. and Leah (Curtis Cooper) who has daughter, Amelle (6) in Denver. I am an animal lover- adopted pets from Humane Society: my dog, Lenny and my black cat, Bailey. I volunteer at Discovery Shop, St Vincents de Paul Voucher Center on Iowa St, and launder St. Columbkille's church linens. My interests and hobbies besides exercise/ yoga classes consist of attending my grandboys activities, traveling, esp. to my children's homes, daily mass, reading, watching a good movie/ TV series, crocheting, dabble in quilting, restoring furniture, thrifting, socialize with my

neighbors and working in my yard/ garden. Fun facts: I like to drive fast and listen to Country and classic rock!

Gary and Beth Brown



We are Gary and Beth Brown. We are excited to be involved in the SWELL program, starting recently on September 13th. We have three children and five grandchildren who challenge us to stay active and healthy. We are both retired. Gary was an elementary school teacher in the Western Dubuque School District where he met Gary Wittman in 1983. He also worked in the Aquin School System and as a substitute teacher in the public and parochial schools. Beth retired from Mercy after 40 years in the Post Anesthesia Care Unit. We enjoy hiking, biking, and snowshoeing. We also like to seek out live music opportunities. Gary enjoys gardening and together we can freeze lots of produce. Beth enjoys sewing, quilting and machine embroidery. We like to travel. We have been to Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, St Martins, and many of the states. Beth has been to all except 2. When we are not on the road, we plan to be at SWELL!!!

SWELL Picnic

We had a wonderful time at the 25 annual Swell picnic. Past member Sandy Meyer suggested having the Laff picnic and bringing a dish to pass 25 years ago. We went to Murphy Park for the first few years and overlooked the City of Dubuque as we ate. When we built our house overlooking the Meadows Golf course, Lisa and I decided to host the picnic at our home and have done so ever since. In 2021, our class was renamed SWELL. A picnic can only run smoothly with good help. I thank my resilient wife, Lisa, for putting up with me and organizing food and clean-up with Judy Kalb and sister Carol Wyatt. Thank you, Steve Rodham, Ken, and Kendy Kunkel, for excellently parking all the cars. Tim Bees, thank you for the beautiful prayer before our meal. Thank you, Izayah McKinnie, for testing our brains with a farewell Simon Says.











THE STAFF

Editor..... Gary Wittman

New Autobiographies..... Patty Clefish, Mary Jane Driscoll

New Autobiographies..... Gary and Beth Brown

Feature Writer.....Gary Wittman

**We are looking for feature writers each month, try your hand at it.
Suggestions (Vacation or travels, sports, important milestones like anniversaries, and hobbies).
Email articles to: garydonaldwittman@gmail.com**