



Work and Family

Happy New Year
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Jumpin' to a New You

Cabin fever got you bouncing off the walls? Turn that energy into a workout. Rebounding – exercising on a mini trampoline – offers the same

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benefits as other aerobic activities, without stressing your knees. And it's fun, whether you do jumps, kicks, or jumping jacks. “Rebounding provides a low-impact alternative to other forms of weight-bearing activities, like walking or running,” says

exercise physiologist Cedric Bryant of the American Council on Exercise. Rebounding can burn 400 to 600 calories an hour, depending on your size and intensity of workout. Some mini trampolines cost less than \$100, but the surface of these inexpensive models may be unstable and allow too much recoil, which can throw your knees, ankles, or hips out of alignment, says Bryant. Your best bet? Find one that supports at least 250 pounds and is 36 inches or more in diameter. These will cost more, but the initial investment will last much longer.

Fat Phases

Think the holidays are bad for your waistline? Check out these other danger zones:

- Freshman 15 – A Cornell University study found that freshman gained about four pounds in the first 12 weeks of school. Over

the course of a school year, that can mean a 12-pound gain.

- Tying the knot – In a one-year study, men who married gained about 11 pounds; those who stayed single, just five. Women who married gained 14, single women, six.



- Suburban spread – A recent study suggests that suburbanites can weigh about six pounds more, on average, than urbanites. Blame sprawl, says experts, which makes walking more difficult.
- Parenthood – Australian research found that Dads gained nearly four pounds during their wives' pregnancy and babies' first year. In another study, six months into motherhood, moms were four pounds heavier than before pregnancy.

Secondhand Smoke = Passive Smoking

Hundreds of thousands of children in American households are considered “passive smokers.” That is, they are non-smokers who are exposed to tobacco smoke on a regular basis, putting their health at serious risk. Infants and young children are among the most seriously affected



by secondhand smoke exposure, increasing their risk for respiratory tract infections such as colds, pneumonia and bronchitis. Children exposed to secondhand smoke are also

more likely to have reduced lung function and symptoms of respiratory irritation such as chronic coughing, excessive phlegm and

wheezing, and a buildup of fluid in the middle ear, which commonly leads to the need for ear tube surgery. Secondhand smoke not only worsens asthma, it may cause it. The EPA estimates that exposure to secondhand smoke increases the number of asthma episodes and severity of symptoms for hundreds of thousands of children with this chronic condition. If you smoke, quitting can improve your child's health as well as your own. Until then, avoid smoking in the presence of your children and don't permit smoking in your house or car, even if your children aren't around at the time. And in restaurants, sit as far away from the smoking section as possible.

Computer Rx

When computer problems are beyond the scope of telephone tech support (and your nerdiest friend), you can try these options before lugging your machine to a repair shop:



- Order home repair – Call the manufacturer for a list of authorized repair firms in your area, and ask the shop if they send out technicians. "A growing number can send someone to your home," says David Heim, a deputy editor at *Consumer Reports*. House calls can cost more per hour but may be worth it, especially if reconnecting the unit will be confusing once you bring it home.
- Find a virtual geek – If an at-home repair isn't for you, consider a new breed of tech-support firms. "With your permission, these technicians take charge of your computer online, run diagnostic tests, and even fix the problem," says David Daniels of Jupiter Research. In some cases, the firms charge less than your computer or software maker and are available 24 hours a day. Yahoo.com provides a list of tech-support companies.
- Lock out amateurs – Bad computer advice can result in lost data and trigger more serious problems. Before engaging any techie – on the phone or in person – ask if he or she is A+ certified by the Computing Technology Industry Association

(CompTIA), the industry's major trade group.

Practicing Personal Quality

Whether or not your organization has a total quality management program, quality always begins with you. Developing quality work habits and attitudes will not only improve your job performance, but most likely will improve your job satisfaction as well. Just as the old masters approached painting with a passion, you can turn your work into a personal masterpiece. The following keys to mastery are adapted from those of George Leonard – an author on personal performance and a master in the martial art of aikido. Apply them to your work, or to any aspect of your life:

1. Be a pupil. Learn what is already known and then make your contribution from there. Find the best teacher you can – a class instructor, book, computer tutorial, business associate, or a knowledgeable friend.
2. Choose the journey. Mastery is a path you choose to take, with no end goal in mind. Enjoy each bend, hill, valley, and plateau along the way.
3. Surrender to the demands of the discipline, even if you feel clumsy or awkward or you grow weary of practicing a skill over and over. Try to find satisfaction in the subtleties of each attempt.
4. Engage your mental game. High performers often visualize their efforts at mastery to get a greater command over the physical, or real. This vision guides the journey.
5. Push the edge. While masters are relentless in their pursuit of "the practice," they do challenge previous limits from time to time. They set goals along the path... and then they continue to practice afterwards.

