

## Play – When Just Do It Becomes Just Try and Stop Me.

We all know that involvement in regular physical activity produces a long list of benefits. It is fitness conditioning building a better body. It is serious medicine preventing disease and promoting good health. It is effective mental therapy mitigating stress and improving cognition. For some, physical activity can also become play. Play is something you'd do for no other reason than for the sake of doing it. You'd do it without gaining any other benefits or secondary outcomes. The pleasure or satisfaction experienced from participating is reason enough to motivate you, even if you have to go out of your way, to get it done.

Unfortunately, too many people consider physical activity to be hard work and never play. They only endure the exercise experience because it is a means to some other end. For example, they exercise to manage weight. If it wasn't an effective means of burning calories, improving metabolism and moving the scale in the right direction, they wouldn't do it. Be open to appreciating and enjoying your activity experiences. Physical activity can sometimes be a pain but, it can also be a source of pleasure and purpose in life. Exertion can be exhilarating!

Focus on simply enjoying the exercise experience or take a personal mastery approach to physical activity. Don't evaluate your success by comparing yourself with others' abilities. Define success on your own terms. Work at applying yourself to physical activities. Develop new skills, learn and try to improve. Derive pleasure from your participation and purpose from what you have accomplished or from planning what you can do next. Or, don't worry about improvement, just use exercise as a break from the responsibilities of your hectic life. Use the activity time to daydream, experience the world around you and enjoy being alive.

Exercise can be a journey of self-discovery and personal development. It can also be just plain fun to do. The two activities I enjoy the most are biking and hiking. Here is a [link](#) to short video that conveys some of the pleasures of pedaling. Here is a [link](#) to the Metro Area Bike Map created by MAPA. In the winter when I can't get out and ride my bike as easily, I like to hike. I go to local spots like [Neale Woods](#), [Fontenelle Forest](#) and [Hummel Park](#).

Exercise can become something you do because you want to do it, not just, because you feel you have to do it. What kinds of physical activities could you see becoming pleasant pastimes that you actually look forward to doing or possibly even passionate pursuits that you can't imagine living without. Just do it can become, just try and stop me. Take some time to play!

*[The Intrinsic Exerciser: Discovering the Joy of Exercise](#)* by Jay C. Kimiecik, PhD.



### **Physical = FUN!**

**Physical activity does not have to be difficult, dull and time consuming to provide significant benefit.**

**You can do an effective stretch in less than one minute, an effective strengthening exercise in less than two and you can accumulate cardio in short bouts throughout the day.**

**Get up and enjoy moving your body today!**