

MARCH 2017

Leader TOOLS

Keeping participants focused on positive lifestyle choices

Healthy Vision



Every year in March, the American Optometric Association (AOA) reminds Americans of the importance of eye health and regular exams. Last year's campaign alerted 140 million consumers about the critical role nutrition plays in maintaining eye health and vision. This year's campaign offers five tips for a lifetime of healthy vision. Below is a quick summary, but find the printable promotional piece here:

Five tips for a lifetime of healthy vision

- 1 Schedule yearly, comprehensive eye exams.
- 2 Protect your eyes against harmful UV rays, wear sunglasses all year.
- 3 Give your eyes a break when using digital devices by following the 20/20/20 rule.
- 4 Eat 5 servings of fruits & vegetables daily, especially leafy greens.
- 5 Practice contact lens safety for wear and for care.

Eye health is important for everyone, but holds an additional concern for those with arthritis. According to the Arthritis Foundation article, 6 Ways Arthritis Can Affect Your Eyes, the same inflammation that can cause damage to the

joints can impact the eyes. The article explains six different eye conditions that are related to different forms of arthritis. Read the full article to find out more about each condition, who it affects, and what can be done to help.

Take time this month to remind participants of the importance of eye health, especially when living with arthritis.



Resource provided by the
Aquatic Exercise Association
www.aeawave.com
941.486.8600

NEUROBICS APPLICATIONS

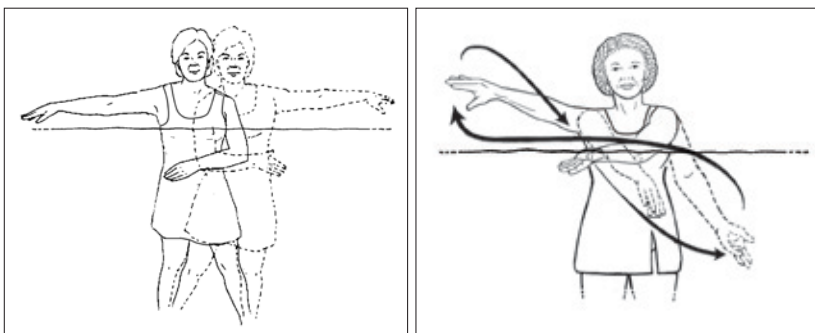
USING COMBOS & VARIATIONS

Submitted by Program Leader Trainers, Laurie Denomme & Katrien Lemahieu

Enhance cerebral function by doing exercises that involve repetition with variation. This brain boosting technique involves learning and practicing an exercise and then repeating performance in a different way. For example: Begin with an ARM SWING. Practice the exercise. Then, repeat the move using variations.

EXERCISE: ARM SWING

Reference: AEA AF Program Leader: A Training Guide for Exercise and Aquatic Programming. Page 86 (AFAP) and 149 (AFEP).



REPETITION

ARM SWING (x16)

Why Repetition? Repetition helps develop mastery of movement. Doing an exercise more than once helps develop muscle and movement memory. Repetition of a learned exercise facilitates confidence and efficiency.

VARIATION 1: SINGLE ARM

RIGHT ARM SWING (x8)

LEFT ARM SWING (x8)

VARIATION 2: RHYTHM

RIGHT ARM SWING in 3s (x4)

LEFT ARM SWING in 3s (x4)

Cued as 'single, single, double'

The Need for Variation: As the body becomes well-rehearsed, the brain is less involved. But like the body, the brain needs to be worked. Different variations help to prepare the body for new and unexpected experiences.

TRAIN THE BRAIN WITH NEUROBICS

As explored in our article in the previous issue of Leader Tools, using your physical and emotional senses in new and unexpected ways helps train the brain. This is called 'neurobics'.

When you first learn an exercise, areas in the visual cortex hold a mental picture and store the name of the move. Repeating the exercise in a slightly different way causes a new pattern of brain activity. Repetition and variation develop new mind-body connections to expand physical and mental capabilities.

Make repetition with variation a neurobic activity using this teaching sequence:

- 1 Learn and practice the ARM SWING sequence with instructor verbal and visual demonstration.
- 2 Repeat the ARM SWING combination signaled only by auditory instruction. Have participants turn their backs to you and follow your verbal command.
- 3 Repeat the ARM SWING sequence with eyes closed.

We rely heavily on visual input. Stimulating the auditory senses to accomplish the same task excites new brain activity. Auditory instruction forces recall of the mental picture and stored name to perform the exercise. Complete lack of visual input puts full attention on the voice instruction and feeling of movement against the resistance of the water.

This teaching sequence uses neurobics as it involves two or more senses in a new context, engages full attention and breaks routine in a significant way.

EXERCISE VARIATION

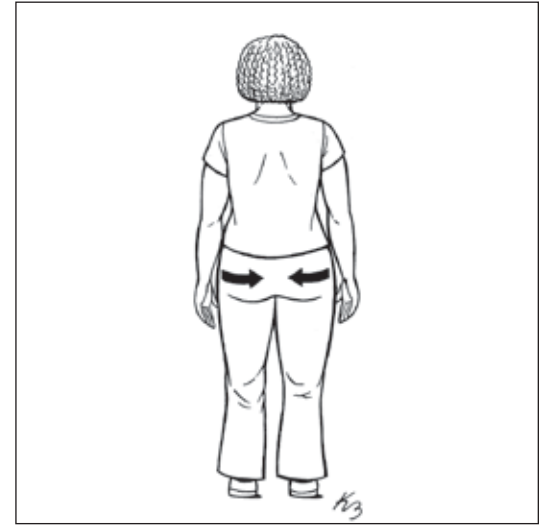
GLUTEAL SET

Submitted by Donna Lewen, Program Leader Trainer

Reference: AEA AF Program Leader: A Training Guide for Exercise and Aquatic Programming. Page 102 (AFAP) and 163 (AFEP).

In the gluteal set, I have participants not only squeeze both gluteals at the same time, but alternately squeeze one side and then the other. They do this for 10 seconds as fast as they can (right/left/right/left). This is usually an 'aha' moment for participants as they realize they have truly forgotten how to effectively use the gluteal muscles!

This exercise enhances body awareness. Many people have 'gluteal amnesia', where the gluteal muscles have "forgotten" how to work effectively. Weakness in the gluteals can ultimately cause concerns with the knees, groin, and low back. One may even experience contralateral (e.g. left shoulder relating to right gluteal) shoulder pain due to the way the fascial system works together between the gluteals and shoulders. Thus, this exercise will assist the participant in understanding which gluteal muscle has 'forgotten' to fire/work, or is working less efficiently than the other.



Gluteal amnesia can sometimes be caused by musculoskeletal trauma; even an injury to the ankle or foot may cause gluteal amnesia (on the same side of the body.) Another cause may simply be under-utilization of the gluteals, the hip extensors. Consider that the gluteals are elongated when the hips are flexed, e.g. sitting in front of the television or computer, riding in a car, etc.

The gluteals are needed to efficiently stand up and sit down, and prevent overuse of the quadriceps muscles, which in turn can cause knee injuries. Have participants pay attention when standing up and sitting down – the knees should not collapse inward. Additionally, for the gluteals to engage more effectively, the knees should be aligned with the ankles (rather than the knees pushing forward) when standing up and sitting down.



EDUCATIONAL EVENT

Have you registered yet for the upcoming International Aquatic Fitness Conference? Scheduled for May 15-20 in Palm Harbor, Florida, this event provides engaging education that will benefit both AFAP and AFEP Program Leaders, providing continuing education needed to maintain your training. The Program Leader Development 7-hour interactive course is being offered on Monday from 8am – 3pm. On Tuesday, the 7-hour BioExercise for Arthritis is being offered to delve into how mental and physical actions are connected. Other sessions offered throughout the conference will also provide continuing education for Program Leaders; look for more featured classes in the April Leader Tools.

If you have not yet completed the required initial training to become an AEA AF Program Leader, IAFC offers an exceptional opportunity! Combine the Online Training with the Program Leader Development course for only \$99, if you are an AEA Member. This is a savings of \$100!

AEA Aquatics | Revolutionizing Fitness



GOING THE EXTRA MILE

*Submitted by Mary-Lee Costello, AFEP
Program Leader*

I had seen a short video on Facebook that showed a fool-proof way to fasten bracelets that have a lobster clasp using a simple tool – a large paper clip. I immediately thought that it would be valuable to my arthritis class. I photographed the image from my computer, printed it out, glued it to card stock, attached a large paper clip, and handed out to each class participant.

This extra work on my part was very well-received. Several male participants said that they are forever trying to fasten bracelets for their wives, so they will earn extra “spouse points” for this tip! Want to provide something similar for your participants? Search the Internet for videos and how-to descriptions, such as the link below.



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