Who here finds it tough to stick to an exercise routine or even get started? Raise your hand.

Who here has ever regretted a workout? Raise your hand.

Most of us probably feel pretty good after we get moving, and it’s rare to regret making the effort to work out. But, we’re all busy—some of us may have back or knee pain, some of us may work long hours, and some of us may just be turned off by the thought of exercise altogether. It’s true that fitting in exercise can be tough—but only if we allow it to be. We make time for the things we value most, and our health should be at the top of this list.

We can all benefit from exercise regardless of our age, shape, or size, and we don’t even need a gym to do so—all we need is a chair. Jodi Stolove, creator of Chair Dancing® Fitness Programs, shows us how we can sit down and shape up. We’re going to be doing a few seated exercises today that you’ll be able to do at home, or even right at your desk at work. Let’s get started!

Read each of the following exercises, demonstrate them, and then try them as a group.

### Tone Your Arms and Legs:

- Sit forward in your chair, using the weights, water bottles, or soup cans you brought.
- Press your leg and arm to the front—like you are cross-country skiing—pulling with your arms, as though you are using ski poles.
- Let’s repeat this 8 times.

### Preparation:

Review each exercise on your own before presenting it to the group. The week before you follow this program, ask all participants to wear comfortable clothes and be ready for movement.

* See important note on the last page.

### Materials:

- Chairs for each participant
- A pair of hand weights, filled water bottles, or soup cans for each participant
- Two paper plates for each participant (optional)
- Fun, upbeat music

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Tone Core Muscles:
- Begin with your shoulders resting on the back of the chair.
- Contract your abdominal muscles, bringing your shoulders up as your leg comes up, and then down as your leg goes down.
- Let’s repeat this 8 times with each side.

Aerobic Chair Dance One
(follow along to mambo music if possible):
- Let’s begin by walking to the beat for 16 counts.
- Then run to the beat, rolling your arms forward.
- Now, roll your arms back.
- And roll your arms forward again, 5-6-7-8.
- And roll your arms back once more.

Aerobic Chair Dance Two
(follow along to a funky, fun beat if possible):
- Lift your knee and hit your plate (or hand) to your knee, alternating right and left.
- Let’s try this 16 times.
- Be sure to contract your abdominal core muscles as you lift your knee.
- Now that our muscles are good and warm, let’s cool down with a couple of stretches.
Side Stretch:
- Sit up straight and raise your arms toward the ceiling.
- Lean toward the right—counting slowly to 4—and then back to the center.
- Now lean left—again counting to 4—then back to the center.
- Let’s repeat both ways, 3 times.

Lower Back Stretch:
- Sit up straight, hugging your right leg.
- Pull up and hold for 5 seconds, leaning your shoulder toward your knee—feeling the muscles in your lower back—then lower and relax.
- Do the same to the other leg.
- Repeat this 4 times, contracting your abdominal muscles as if a magnet is pulling your belly button toward the back of your chair.

For Next Week:
Let’s make it a goal to try at least 2-3 of these chair exercises or stretches on our own before next week’s meeting.

* IMPORTANT NOTE
The information presented through this material is educational and should not substitute for the advice of a physician or other qualified healthcare provider. The information is also general in nature and may not suit an individual’s particular health situation. You should not rely on any information in this material in place of a visit, call, consultation, or the advice of a physician or other qualified healthcare provider. The appearance of any trade name in this material is not an endorsement or recommendation of that product.

All exercises and descriptions were provided courtesy of Jodi Stolove, creator of Chair Dancing® Fitness Programs. Chair Dancing® Fitness offers two free three-minute videos to use for a quick workout; they’re on the homepage at www.ChairDancingFitness.com.