What do all of these statements have in common? They are just some of the excuses we tell ourselves in order to justify not being physically active. If we took the time we spent making excuses to get up and get active, we would probably all be in great shape! It seems that, when it comes to exercise, we tend to start off each year with the best of intentions to get in shape and stick to a physical activity program or routine. Then, right around February or so, our enthusiasm wanes, other engagements seem more important, and the excuse floodgates open.

Why does this happen?
Perhaps we made the wrong fitness goals or didn’t make any fitness goals. Maybe we overdid it. Maybe we got bored. Whatever the reason, as we travel down the road to fitness and health, we need to remember that this is a continuous journey. Whether we are starting or continuing on our journey, let’s use the following tips to keep us motivated and to help us leave excuses on the road behind us.

- Grab a fitness buddy and use each other for support and motivation. You can exercise together or even place a friendly wager. For example, whoever logs more steps on a pedometer for the week wins ___.

- Do not exercise for the purpose of losing weight. This might sound strange to us as TOPS members, but if we focus on how we feel, rather than what the scale reads, we are more likely to stay active. Plus, if you are exercising and replacing fat with muscle, this might not be reflected on the scale initially.

- If you don’t like it, don’t do it. Maybe you’re just not a gym person and that’s fine. There is some form of physical activity for everyone. You just have to find what works best for you.

- Try something new! Whether it is a class or an active video game, trying something new will keep you from getting bored. Make it a goal to try something new each month. Even if you spend more time giggling and fumbling during that new yoga or dance class, at least you tried it and had fun in the process.

- How do you feel after exercising? Empowered? Energized? Strong? Remember that feeling. More often than not, you will feel better after exercising than before you started and you will probably never say, “Gee, I really wish I hadn’t exercised today.”