



If You're not Assessing, You're Guessing!

A while back we lost a fitness icon, Jack LaLanne. At home I was taking some leisure TV time and an old commercial appeared with Jack LaLanne endorsing a product. It caught my eye and had me thinking back on some of his teachings. LaLanne was ahead of his time with his views on exercise. He was all about movement and consistency when it comes to exercise. He did not tolerate excuses. LaLanne was a huge motivator to get people moving, doing some kind of exercise every single day.

"Too many people make excuses like 'I am too old,' or 'I don't have time,' or 'it costs money.' Then when they get sick they go to the doctor and want a shot in the backside or medication to make them healthy," LaLanne once said.

To get started on an exercise routine, you first must find out how your body functions and moves. There are basic movements the human body can do that should be regularly included in your exercise routine — squat, lunge, push, pull, and bend. The important question is: Are you able to do all of them with full range of motion and no pain?

At Fit1 we use what is called the functional movement screen to assess these basic movements. It scores each person based on range of motion, compensation, and whether you have pain. The functional movement screen will show us if you have lost function in any of these movements due to a past injury, history, or lack of use. If you are unable to perform one of these movements with full range of motion, then your exercise program should include exercises working on improving that movement along with exercises performing the other movements. No matter what you have going on, whether it is arthritis, an injury or something in your history that has limited your physical activity, there is always something you can do.

As LaLanne preached, "The only way you can hurt your body is if you don't use it. Many people have arthritis, and they get bum knees, a bum back. A lot of guys get a little pain in the toe or knee and then they won't exercise. Well, you have 640 muscles in your body. There may be a few exercises you can't do, but there are hundreds you can do!"

We learn from our functional movement screen of any imbalances or potential injuries that you may have. Being unable to perform these movements pain free, with full range of motion, means you are at risk for an injury. Many fitness centers don't know about or understand the functional movement screen, and they will prescribe a fitness program without taking this step. We won't put fitness on top of dysfunction. You'll end up injured instead of getting in shape. We use and perform the functional movement screen and design an exercise program based on your results. It's a path to set you up for success.

Which takes us back to LaLanne's advice, "You have to take care of your 640 muscles, and the number one thing is exercise. You can eat perfectly, but if you don't exercise, you cannot get by."