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Beware the "feel good" treadmill

Saturday, November 19, 2016

My data driven mind knew it was wrong - very wrong. Still, I wanted to believe it.

DH & I are in Tennessee visiting his mother in the nursing home. Although I'm thankful he was finally given permission to travel (10 weeks after brain surgery), this was our most depressing visit yet. While at 96, some confusion may be expected, yesterday there were very few lucid moments. There wasn't much to do except listen to her ramble on about things that made no sense at all. At least she did know who Joe was.

Usually I stick around to give moral support, but something else was different. The home smelled bad. I visit nursing homes all the time as part of our church ministry. I understand the problems they face, but this was enough to make me nauseous. I went for regular walks outside to clear my head. Joe hung in there the whole time.

On one of my walks I saw a new sign. The home is under new management. They were bought by some corporation. The cuts are obvious. Joe's sister said the change was recent. She's a retired doctor and lives nearby. Laundry is now only being done once a week.

I know from my charity work at home that most of our state's Medicaid money goes to pay for nursing home residents who have exhausted all their funds. It doesn't take long.

The staff seems to be caring people, but they are very low paid and move on as soon as possible so there is a high turnover. Medicaid payments continue to be cut because "no new taxes" are our favorite slogan.

So I went for an early morning run - always a great stress reliever. We stay in the same hotel every visit. The staff greets me by name. I'm also that woman who runs around their parking lot. One loop is exactly .3 miles.

Today I was running very well when it started to rain HARD. They need the rain, but I wish it could have held off for an hour. I continued for 2.4 miles then retreated to the fitness room for a cool down walk.

There I met the "feel good" treadmill of my blog title.

I walk comfortably at 4.0 and set the speed accordingly. That felt way too slow. I bumped it up - 4.1 - 4.2 - 4.4. OK, this wasn't even going to break a sweat!

So I started to count my steps. I have a calibrated brain. I know exactly how many steps per minute I need for 15.0 minute mile (4.0). While the treadmill told me I was walking a sub-14 min mile. I KNOW it was close to a 17 minute mile. Oh yeah! In 1 mile I burned 168 calories. NO I DIDN'T!

Running a 10 min mile burns about 100 calories

Walking a 15 min mile burns about 60 calories

Much as I would like some good news and assume I can now eat an extra big lunch, I know it's not true.

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It's exactly the same as the feel good sizing creep that made me feel so happy to be wearing the size 10 I wore in high school. Too bad it took me so long to realize that the size 10 of my youth meant a 25 inch waist and 35 inch hips. Now the denial sizing allows me a 30" waist and 40" hips and will still call me a 10.

Good thing I found Spark People 8 years ago. It's not only my motivation, it's my accountability.

If you have read this far, thank you. Blogging always helps an over-stressed brain.

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SPEDED2



So very sorry!

1655 days ago



INCH_BY_INCH



It is hard to see that. Sometimes as we age we need these places to help in the care. Unfortunately that is not always positive. Right now we are working overtime to keep "our" mother

in her home. My prayers for your endurance with this all.



1655 days ago



SUNNYCALIGIRL



The problems with the nursing home are distressing. I have visited elderly members of my congregation in them, they are called something different here in California, but I forget what. One home had Excellent programs, a great hobby room for the patients, was attentive about my friend's special dietary needs that stemmed from her religious beliefs, etc. But it STANK. I am not sure why, except that two patients were crowded into rooms that were obviously intended for one person. Then a different home was quite spacious, didn't smell, but the food and isolation of the patients was dreadful. It seems care is very unevenly managed in this country. It makes me dread my future as an elderly person. Thank G-d for SP too, I agree with that! Maybe belonging to it will keep me out of a home.

1659 days ago



ADRIENALINE



Thinking about Joe and his mom today. Thankful that my dad lived to 99 1/2 with a crystal clear mind and fit body. I'm thankful that he did so well all of his life and double happy that I might have good genes. I don't ever use a treadmill and I'm thankful for this part of the California drought although that at all happy about the rest of it. I hope you and all of your family have a great Thanksgiving!

1660 days ago



BBEAGAN



It's kind of like people don't get where their taxes go, and what a tax cut actually means... How hard for you.

1662 days ago



2BDYNAMIC



This is at best a very difficult situation and disappointed to hear about the treadmill situation.

1662 days ago



GINIEMIE



It's a crying shame the way they cut corners and "abuse" our elderly with less than a clean environment and less than appetizing food. It should be considered criminal neglect as far as I am concerned-just because they may not be cognizant of their surroundings or are for some reason not able to afford a higher cost setting doesn't mean that they should be treated with less than what the owners would expect for themselves or their loved ones. Sorry, for the decline in her home but so glad that she still recognized Joe.

Yes, treadmills, exercycles, fitbit, trackers are all a guesstimate of where you are at in measures of exercise. The creep is everywhere and the unsuspecting are thinking they can eat more because

they did X amount on the treadmill when they actually did X-yz!



1662 days ago



MARYALICE411

Here in TX they have to post the number to the state and if the nursing home doesn't pass the sniff test, you call. I was in a nursing home that didn't pass the sniff test and I couldn't find the number, so I called another nursing home for the number. They flew in a panic what was the problem, was it something they could fix was I sure I needed to call state. It took me 5 mins to calm them down enough that they understood I wanted to report a different home.

1662 days ago



ANAKIE

A well run facility should never "smell bad". Yes they may have the occasional pocket of off smells, but not so bad to make you feel sick. I would complain LOUDLY to the corporation. Prayers.

1663 days ago



SUNNYBEACHGIRL

It is heart wrenching to watch your family member deteriorate. Getting really good care is expensive and sometimes keeping them at home is not a better solution.

Glad the DH is better

1663 days ago



LIVEDAILY

A very direct letter to the nursing home head office would alleviate some of your stress. Explain that, yes, in a private home, one could possibly get away with doing laundry once a week, but when a facility is caring for elderly people, often in diapers, that laundry NEEDS to be done 2 or 3 times a week. There should be some kind of regulation about that I would think. Tell them that when you visited, the facility smelled to the point that it made you nauseous. Finally, explain that if conditions don't improve, it would be very difficult to recommend this facility to others. THAT will get their attention. I certainly hope conditions improve!! My best friend was very outspoken at the facility where her Mom was. Someone has to be, especially when the people there can't speak up for themselves. I'm glad Joe's Mom recognized him!

1663 days ago



JEANKNEE

I'm sorry to hear about the declining condition of your MIL and the facility providing her care. Does Tennessee have an agency that serves as ombudsmen?

I've never seen numbers on machines provide calorie burn information that's anywhere near accurate. And, yes, I've entered my specifics. Information provided? Garbage. Yes. Beware!

1663 days ago



HELEN_BRU

My 96 yr. old friend phoned me today. She seems okay but repeats herself a lot and I reminded her that when I phoned her over a week ago, she told me never to call her again! Doesn't remember a thing. I guess she was out of it then. You never know what to expect.

Good thing his mother has someone looking after her concerns.

1663 days ago



MARYJEANSL

I am so sorry to hear about the decline of the quality of your mil's nursing home. That is so awful. My mother was briefly in a nursing home after surgery a few years back, and it too smelled. I just hated every minute I had to spend there. I wish there were easy answers to improving the quality and care at such places. :-)

1663 days ago



CD3409143

Sorry to hear that .My Dad spent his last years in a home that was supposedly run well - too bad most of the staff were lazy and too preoccupied with their OWN lives and sending remittances "home" to care about their patients or to do their jobs properly. I can't imagine what it would be like with someone also trying to squeeze the last red cent out as well.

1663 days ago



DOVESEYES

You have a great mind and it is always interesting data :,), sorry about your MIL's care, it is not good to leave the bedding so long.

1663 days ago



CD4114015

I especially love SOME blogs...and yours is one because you and others, Jeanknee for one have those "data driven" minds and they fascinate me! Talk about "computer brains".





I feel bad about your situation now...will continue prayer and John will too!
1663 days ago



PEGGYO
You're welcome
1663 days ago



KRISZTA11
I'm sorry for the signs of decline in your MIL's nursing home, it is so sad to see something that worked well deteriorate.



1663 days ago



ALICIA363
I love how you have the factual numbers at hand, to dispute the inaccurate treadmill. Wonder if my recent two minutes really were two minutes - I'll have to pay attention next time!



So sorry about MIL. Grateful that Joe has you.



1663 days ago



ONEKIDSMOM
Yes, poorly calibrated treadmills in hotel fitness rooms? Not a surprise!



So sad about the home going downhill.
1663 days ago



MILLEDGE2
Oh no! You and Joe are so good about visiting his mother. I'm sorry this visit has been especially hard!
1663 days ago



DR1939
There should be an ombudsman available to help with the SNF problem. Check with social services at the hospital nearest to her. They should be able to help.
1663 days ago



PRNCSCUP1-2FULL
The people who do care burn out quickly in nursing homes because they care and work harder and then are over stressed! I'm sorry your MIL seems to be worsening. Ha. wouldn't it be grand if we could trust the sizing and the machines? But, the key is that you got on the treadmill and ran your parking lot and didn't give up out of frustration and sadness! God love love you all!
1663 days ago



SMILINGEYES2
It is hard seeing loved ones in such places. Yet, we are fortunate when the staff are caring. It is good there is family nearby who have a medical background. Know your dh appreciated your support and whether she remembers the visit he will know he was there.
1663 days ago



PHOENIX1949
Sadly, it sounds like nursing homes are the same all over the U.S. Even if it gets to the point that Joe's mother doesn't know him, he will know he was there for her!



You know yourself well which is inspirational.



1663 days ago



WATERMELLEN
That sounds so tough . . . when citizens are encourage to believe that voting for "self interest" constitutes democracy (rather than voting for the common good) . . . then the vulnerable bear the consequences. Is it possible to have a privately hired care attendant go into the home to give your MIL greater support? If incontinence products are rationed rather than residents being provided with changes as needed, then the results you describe will occur together with loss of dignity.



And you're so right about the tread mill creep as WELL as the size creep.
1663 days ago





GET2BEFIT

I hope you, Joe and his mom get better! Super blog!
1663 days ago

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