



Do As My Dog Does: Tune and Be Tuned

Dogs reflexively perform "upward and downward dog" to stretch and re-set themselves after lying around for hours. (And I'm noticing that they do it without benefit of FitBit© or Ambien© - mindblowing.)

Reader, for this newsletter about tuning up your body, I could have used the analogy of a race car driver at a pit stop, or a musician calibrating her trombone, but - full disclosure - Buck (pictured above) has been complaining about not having his own Instagram, and this promotional newsletter was our compromise.

But back to my point: Those of you reading who are not dogs know that staying tuned up requires attention for humans. We may not immediately notice when we need to stretch or move, and even when we do, we may decide something else is more important and miss the opportunity. By the time many of us realize that we need a quick tuneup, we are in pain.

One of the really strange things about our culture is that it's not set up to make us feel good, perhaps because people who feel good don't buy as much stuff. If you're trying to take good care of yourself, you can often find yourself swimming upstream. Most of us need a plan, and often an outside eye or hand, to help us stay tuned up.

The best thing for staying in tune is noticing how you feel physically, which is hard enough for some people. The next thing is to actually respond by doing what will make your body feel good and not doing what won't. To say such a self-evident thing feels foolish, but we all need to hear it, because when it comes to our bodies, we frequently fail to do the things we know would be healthiest for us.

It's a good idea to do a short awareness routine involving stretch, strength and coordination. I overheard my sister - the yoga teacher sister - telling a student who was starting a home regimen "Only four poses!" I think her unorthodox prescription was based on the idea that if you only think of doing four poses, you're more likely to start and continue the regimen. You can find a starting regimen of any kind on the internet, or, of course, I can adapt one to your particular issues, your personality, and body.

The biggest things a tune-up appointment can do for your wellbeing are to help you

- feel your body and discern which body sensations warrant a physical response
- take appropriate actions - from exercise to eating to sleep - to improve your physical performance and ease before your imbalances become injuries.
- Remind the animal you are, consciously and unconsciously, of the things that really matter to you, and the ways you are open to connecting with them.

Take a moment to – well-- actually just take a moment or two (but not more than four!). That's the most important tuneup.