

Episode 168 Transcript : The Best Money I've Spent Lately

Karen Brown:

Hi, everybody. Welcome to episode number 168. Today we're going to talk about the value of hiring a trainer. Now don't dash off, a trainer may not be in your budget. We'll talk about that, don't worry.

Karen Brown:

We talk a lot about exercise and moving in the 167 episodes over on The Oldish that proceeded today's episode. It's really no different for our viewers on Real Life Renos. The value of keeping your body moving, of keeping it strong and fit, is immeasurable. What happens if you don't? Well, your muscles get weak. They eventually will atrophy, which is partial or complete wasting away a part of your body. Sounds awful, doesn't it?

Karen Brown:

As your body weekends you're more susceptible to falls. And when a fall happens, people tend to get afraid that another fall will happen so they sit more. And as they sit more, their body atrophies more, so that when they do get up they are that much more likely to fall. It's a cycle. And having worked in fallen injury prevention for the better part of three decades, I can tell you that a fall is the quickest way to lose independence. That's something we all want to avoid. I assume we do. Nobody wants to be dependent on other people to help you get dressed or you shower or make your meals, or otherwise intrude into your life if you don't need them to be there. This is a proactive step you can take for yourself.

Karen Brown:

I won't ask you to do something that I don't do. And so for those who have watched this show over the past years, you've heard me talk about my treadmill. In fact, many of you may have seen it behind me on some of the videos. It's not here in this room, but it's still there. This summer I decided to kick it up a notch since I now have access to a fitness center that I can walk to.

Karen Brown:

I hired a trainer for one session. One session, that's all I wanted. I wanted that trainer to help me develop a routine that addressed my concerns, something that I could keep up and work at steadily, in addition to showing me how to use the equipment in the gym properly. I know that it's one thing to have equipment, but if you don't know how to use it properly you could actually injure yourself and I didn't want injure myself. So it was a multifaceted session.

Karen Brown:

I definitely wanted to talk about my goals and make sure that the trainer understood my goals. Like a lot of you, I've got lousy knees. Range of motion was a goal that I had. Balance is a goal that I have. Increasing core strength is a goal that I also have, and it's a goal that the trainers that he works on with pretty much all of his clients. I've been doing a series of time building exercises that involve the plank posture. When you get down on the ground, for me, I held myself up on my elbows and it's a really good core strength exercise. However, I now have a piece of bone floating in my elbow, and it has progressed to the point where I can no longer bear my own body weight. So indeed, at this point I can no longer even straighten my right arm completely.

Karen Brown:

That was something that I needed to deal with. I am seeing a specialist shortly. Don't worry about it, it's going to get fixed. The solution is probably a surgical one. However, this issue with the bone in my elbow has been going on for a couple of years, getting worse and worse and worse. And I can feel that my shoulder is compensating for it. What that means to me is that probably some of my muscles are starting to atrophy. I wanted the trainer to help me with exercises that could stall that atrophy and build back strength in advance of what I anticipate will be a surgical solution.

Karen Brown:

Let me tell you, this was the best money I have ever spent. It cost me \$87. The session lasted 90 minutes. And my trainer developed a routine I can do in 40 minutes. The best part, it's a series of 15 repetitions of a whole variety of exercises. So I'm never doing one thing nearly long enough to get bored. Boredom has been a problem for me. I get bored on the treadmill. I have to have my treadmill angled toward the TV so that I can watch TV, or I have to have my earbuds in and listen to a book. But even so, I'm constantly watching the timer on the treadmill, waiting for it to be over.

Karen Brown:

I have followed the path he sent me on for several weeks now and I feel a lot stronger for it. COVID restrictions mean that I can't get into the gym every day, but I understand which exercises I need the gym equipment for and which exercises I can do in my home. So that's really important. I do have weights at home, I have two sets. One that's two pounds and one that's five pounds. A couple of these exercises require 7.5 pound weights, so I just compensate by holding a five and a two pound in each hand, I can do that. And that helps me do what I need to do with what I've got.

Karen Brown:

The point that I'm trying to make is that the important component of this whole thing is that I hired a trainer to show me what I needed because I couldn't figure it out. I'm not an expert in that in any way, shape or form, but I know that I need to move. I happen to have access to a gym where I can do these exercises, but if you don't, there are exercises you can do outside of the gym. The important thing is to have somebody who understands your goals, understands your restrictions, your challenges, and helps you develop a routine.

Karen Brown:

This 15 repetition piece has been gold to me. Nothing takes me too long, and it actually works every single part of my body from head to toe. And he showed me which parts everything works, and I feel the difference between one exercise and another in terms of how my body was reacting to it. I also felt it the next day. I'm not going to lie, I did. And I continue to feel it the next day, but it's really good. I can tell you I'm actually getting a little bit addicted to the feeling after I finish my exercises.

Karen Brown:

Come to find out that that afterglow is the result of the release of endorphins. Now, endorphins interact with the body's receptors and they reduce the perception of pain, which is probably why I don't feel it right away, I just feel great. And they trigger a positive feeling in the body. That's good. So it's those endorphins I'm getting used to, and I'll probably never be the sort of person who just can't wait to get in

the gym and exercise, but I do recognize the value of it and it does feel good afterward. And I really am a little bit addicted to this endorphin release.

Karen Brown:

If hiring a trainer, isn't in your budget, consider asking your loved ones to get together and jointly hire you a trainer as a gift for the holidays or for your birthday, whenever that is coming up. It's really a worthwhile expense. Like I said, my trainer cost \$87 for 90 minutes. Shop around and I'm sure you can find somebody. If you're already working with a OT, an occupational therapist, ask your OT to help you develop a routine. They know a lot of exercises and they'll be abundantly familiar with your specific challenges already.

Karen Brown:

That old expression, move it or lose it, is really true. And to the extent that we're able, we need to keep on moving. Don't have weights? Use bottles of water, cans of food, bags of cat food or dog food, whatever you've got around the house to be the weight. Weigh it on a scale and then you'll know. You could actually pour dog food into some kind of a storage food bag and pour it to the weight that you need. I mean, there are all kinds of inventive solutions that you can figure out if you want to do this badly enough.

Karen Brown:

Skipping is a great cardio exercise and I'm hearing a lot about that on social media lately. But if you don't have a skipping rope, you can do the motions. You don't need a rope to pretend to skip, right? Right. Thai chi and yoga are terrific for balance and strength, and they don't require any previous knowledge or previous experience. There are a ton of Thai chi and yoga videos on YouTube. Jump onto YouTube and have a look there.

Karen Brown:

There is a series of video classes that I highly, highly recommend. I will link it below for you, but it's Western University's Canadian Center for Activity and Aging website. Okay, Western University, the Canadian Center for Activity and Aging. They have videos to strengthen your heart, increase your cardio respiratory fitness, strength training and balance. Highly recommend them. Have difficulty standing? Check out chair yoga on YouTube, lots of videos for that. I think maybe two or three years ago there was one chair yoga video, now there are scads, you can find one.

Karen Brown:

Weather keeping you indoors? If you live in a four season climate like I do, develop a routine in your house that involves associating certain exercises with certain parts of the house. For instance, you might do deep knee bends or lunges in a kitchen where you can hang onto a counter or a kitchen chair. That'd be easy. You might do sit-ups in the living room where there's more room to spread out. Set up a walking path through your house, through the various rooms, that'd be easy. You could do leg and arm circles in the air during the commercials of your favorite TV program. Don't push fast forward on your DVR, actually let the commercial play out and make use of that time. Okay.

Karen Brown:

We can all do something to maintain and increase our fitness. Renovations aren't just about physical to changes to the space we live in. Real life renovations are also about changing things in your life about your activities, the way you think about things and the way you choose to live your life. It can all make your life a better place to be.

Karen Brown:

Until next week, have a great week and take good care. Bye.