

FITNESS WEEKEND

to change

your life and his

CCC 02294

SELF

FEB. 1979 \$1.50

Health
Weekend to
Change
Your Life
and His

FITNESS APPEAL

and how to get it

Just watching can be exciting. Fast, muscle-sleek, sensual—the sight of a well-trained body pumps adrenaline. Men in track or basketball shorts, men in dance tights or football pants, have always exposed great legs and even greater buns. Now women have adapted track suits and leotards into some of their sexiest looks. (If you're in doubt, see page 50.) And maybe we have a sportswoman—Gussy Moran—to thank for it. She started the whole thing in 1949, when she strolled onto the court at Wimbledon in her lace-edged panties...and got more publicity than the winner that year.

But there's a lot more to it than clothes. Fitness has become a way of living, feeling, even loving. Some have raised it to an almost mystic fervor, some call it the new elitism, and still others refer to the fitness "craze," or "craziness." It can become obsessive, but on the sane ground floor it is a healthy move to know, control, care for and enjoy our bodies...and our minds. You can't fault that. It is taking responsibility for ourselves. A serious business, but one that provides more pleasure than most. Perhaps that's its very appeal.

Sports, for instance, are both good for you and fun. They may not make you live longer, as some of the sports "medicine men" have promised, or make you a sexual champion, but they are one of the most natural, sociable and enjoyable ways of keeping your body toned and firm, your mind alert and refreshed. Then, too, according to all the surveys, men like healthy, natural women; women like healthy, virile men. Nothing's new, but something is sure recharged. Now we're all running with it. Dr. Joan Ulyot, a marathoner and specialist in sports medicine, says it this way: "Exercise puts sparkle in a woman's eyes, pink in her cheeks and creates a physical vitality that almost bursts out. She becomes body centered and very sensual."

There is plenty of psychological research showing that arousal, whether it is caused by fear, aggression or anxiety, raises the level of passion. And a good competitive sport creates a healthy combination of all three emotions. Give the right man and woman the right game, and fitness appeal is sure to start sparks flying.

It begins early; boys discover girls—touch football becomes more touch than football—and girls enjoy it. The excitement of Saturday football, the ice-skating rink, the softball games, the beach—that healthy American pursuit of happiness and competition, with a shy dash of love. We know it from our adolescence, and now we are discovering it's even more fun as adults.

Squash courts are the new singles' scene, men and women competing against each other just for the game of it. Men's sports uniforms—from football and baseball to jogging suits—are getting tighter and sexier. Even sports promoters have caught on. The Dallas Cowboys for women, the "Cowgirls" for the men—all right there in living color. Now other professional football teams are

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getting in on the act. Pro teams probably held as many tryouts for cheerleaders and pom-pom girls last year as they did for linemen and wide receivers.

Other television people know what's hot, too. Charlie's Angels wear more sports outfits—once even football uniforms—than they do evening dresses. But what we're really talking about is good, clean fitness appeal that turns everyone on, without television hype, incense or drugs. We've discovered the joy of our bodies through stretching, extending, training and exposing them to the sun, the snow, the water and the air. Salty skin, from sea or sweat, is sexy. Strength and stamina are feminine. Fitness is appealing. And if you want to find out how to get more of it, this issue of *Self*, and all those to come in the future, will show you many ways. →

Take the ranch home with you," says Deborah Mazzanti, owner of Rancho La Puerta, the famous health resort in Mexico. And that is exactly what you can do without even going there, if you follow this weekend fitness plan mapped out for you by Mark and Melinda Blau. What's more, you'll have a lot of fun.

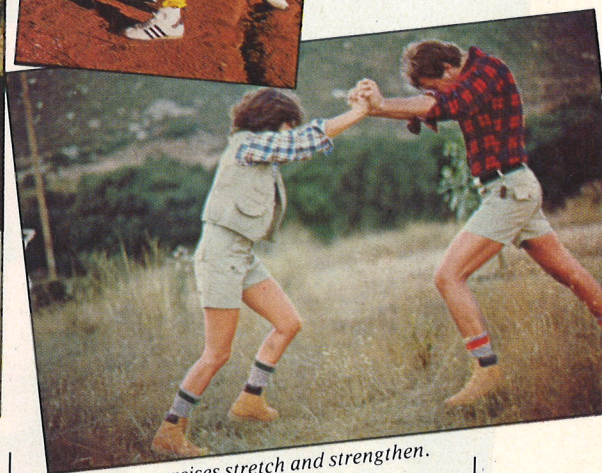
by Melinda Blau



Two can exercise as one. See "Doing It Together," next pages.



Stretching tight back muscles.



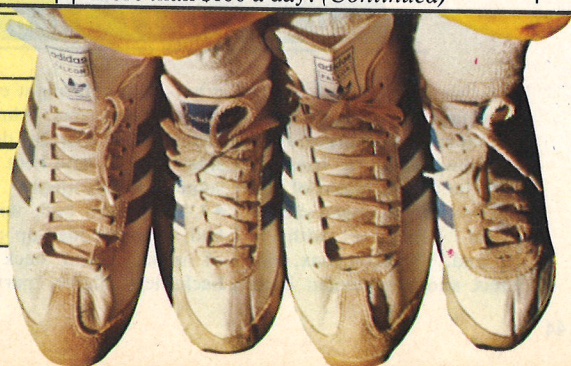
Resistance exercises stretch and strengthen.

WEEKEND SCHEDULE

Friday P.M.	Unwind with stretch exercises; light dinner; early bed.
Saturday	
6:30 A.M.	Warm-up exercises, then walk; bring backpacks and shop for food.
8:30	Breakfast—skip the sugar in your coffee.
10-10:45	Dance exercise to your favorite music.
11	Make a low-calorie dish together for tonight's meal.
12:30 P.M.	Lunch—vegetables and fresh fruit, not pizza!
2-4	Play a favorite sport outside the house; walk to it!
4-5	Do stretching exercises to relieve tight muscles.
6-8	Relax; bathe together; give each other massages.
8:30	Dinner—you made it earlier.
10-?	Go out to a disco and dance until...
Sunday	
9:30 A.M.	Take a long, brisk walk or run.
11:00	Brunch—as long as it's not eggs Benedict—and the Sunday paper.
1-3 P.M.	Try a new sport or stick with an old favorite—anything that will get you out and on the move.
4-5	Stretch—today your muscles are even tighter!
6:30	Dinner out—try a new spot—then early to bed.
Monday A.M.	Wake up 45 minutes earlier than usual; warm up and walk.
	Keep it up—and Mondays will never be the same.

Melinda Blau is a New York-based writer who contributes frequently to magazines. She has also written several books for children.

On arrival, Mark and I were work-weary and "disconnected" from our bodies. Skeptical but willing, we plunged into the Ranch health program: Up at six for a three-mile hike and then choosing from an incredible smorgasbord of classes and sports, we logged in about five hours of exercise daily. Vigorous moments were punctuated by peaceful ones—taking massages, saunas, whirlpools. Deborah tells her disciples that the key to creating—and sticking with—a regular health plan is being convinced that fitness is essential. A weekend at the Ranch made us believers; but you don't have to go that far. Working together, two people can make the Ranch philosophy part of their everyday lives—without ever leaving home—and *without* having to spend more than \$100 a day! (Continued)



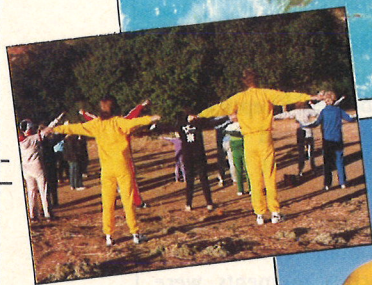
FITNESS WEEKEND

Deborah Mazzanti's advice about exercise is simple and realistic: Find the regimen that's best for you—"not the most fun but the least objectionable." A good fitness program incorporates four elements—flexibility, coordination, endurance and strength—and features movements that work all areas of the body. Strive for an hour-a-day goal, ideally divided into two or three time segments throughout the day. Your morning and midday exercise should be vigorous, at least 20 minutes of constant huffing and puffing or . . .

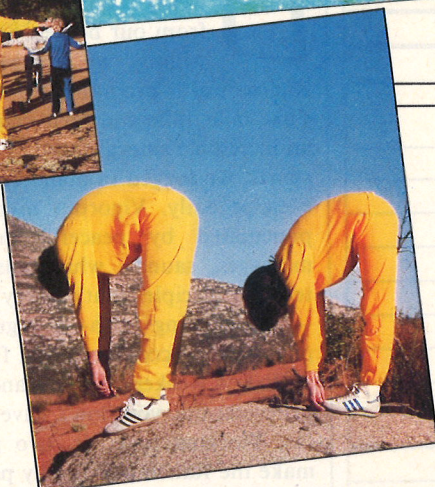
As one Ranch instructor put it, "the Three P's—pant, perspire, and palpitate!"

Any aerobic exercise will do it—running, swimming, bicycling, skipping rope, dancing or brisk walking. In this same category is a recent entry into the Fitness Sweepstakes—the Parcours, a concept that combines aerobics with exercise. You walk or run a track (the one at the Ranch is two and a half miles, but lengths vary), stopping to follow directions at exercise stations along the way. Parcours and

Left: Rancho's dazzling pool. Opposite: Basketball and 10th station (small photo) on the 2 1/2-mile Parcours track.



Top: Rotate arms, making small circles that gradually get larger.



Right: Bending at the waist, let body drop slowly; relax in this position.

WARMING-UP

You don't start your car in third gear—don't do it to your body either. All physical activities should begin by warming up the muscles. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Start at the top, let your head hang down, feel its weight; then

rotate it slowly in both directions. Continue by traveling down the body, stretching, bending or turning the muscles in your shoulders, arms, wrists, waist, stomach, thighs, hamstrings, knees, ankles. Do four to eight repetitions

of each exercise, moving slowly and smoothly. Ne bounce or make abrupt movements. Always maintain a balance, moving and right, clockwise and counterclockwise. After minutes of warm-ups, you don't feel tired—just go

DOING IT TOGETHER

During the New York water shortage a few years ago, bumper stickers urged us to "Shower with a friend." In the fitness boom of the Seventies, the slogan should read "Exercise with a friend." You can coax, correct and compliment each

other—and you might even have a good time. Almost any exercise can be done side by side—and here are some two-body ideas:

- Use a beach ball, tennis ball, even a rolled-up pair of socks. Stand back to back, legs slightly parted,

far enough from each other to feel a "stretch" when you raise hands over heads and touch fingertips. Take turns: one person passes the ball overhead; the other returns it through the legs. Do it in time to fast music, vigorously stretching and

Pass sideways, pivoting and stretching the waist.

Follow the leader—knees bent, stomachs and buttocks tight.



FITNESS WEEKEND

During the twilight
hours, create

a bridge from day to night....

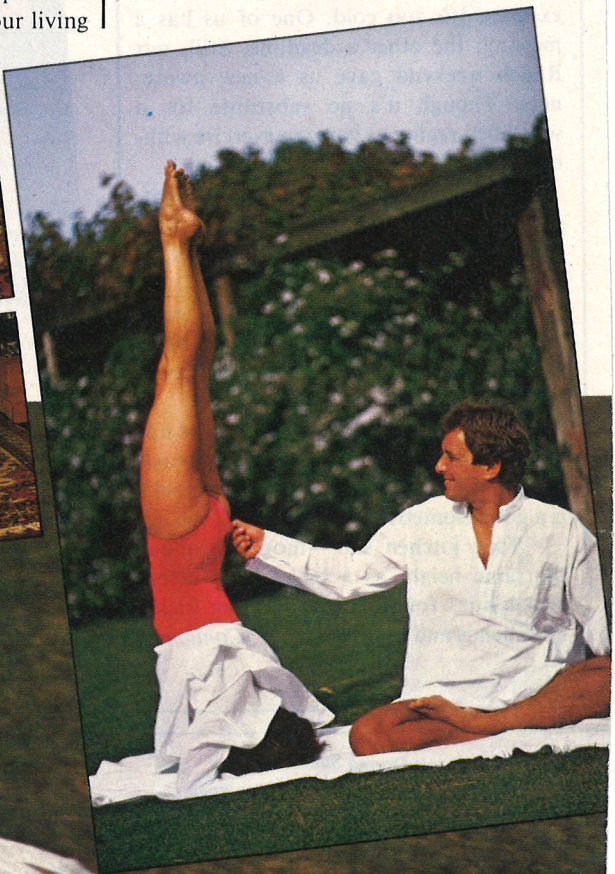
Use exercise to wind up—and to wind down. Deborah warns her guests of the dangers of “swallowed tensions”—the Mazzanti expression for those times when you have to act rationally on the outside but seethe on the inside. Rather than keep the demons in, relax and ease the strains of the day with 15 minutes of slow stretching or flexibility exercises—so stress doesn’t become *distress*. No matter what type of exercises you do, move into the various positions as if you’ve been reprogrammed into slow motion. Hold the positions until you “feel” the muscles; do two to four repetitions of each exercise.

Yoga is a perfect twilight exercise. A disciplined body art that takes years to master, the various postures stretch tight muscles and the deep breathing helps you “center,” putting your body into a state of harmony and balance.

Naturally, winding down was easier at the Ranch—no children underfoot, no phone calls or six o’clock news, nothing to intrude on the quiet of the moment. We’ve found, too, that the yoga postures are a bit more difficult to do in our living

room without an instructor to correctly position our bodies. But our twilight exercise time does a lot to relax us and to bring back the serenity of our weekend at the Ranch. □

Mark and I try various yoga postures. Small photos: attempting the “lotus” position; Mark in the “wheel”; a headstand. Bottom: Two heads meet in the “fish” posture.

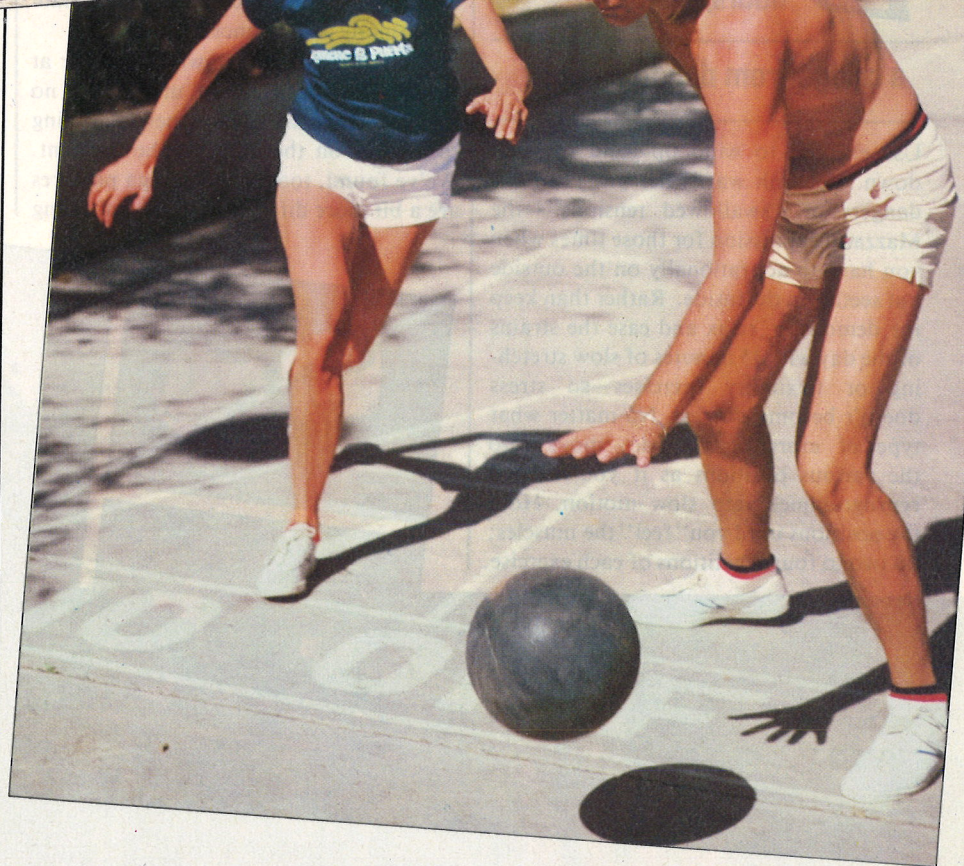


similar systems are becoming increasingly popular—a welcome change for people who find straight jogging or walking monotonous.

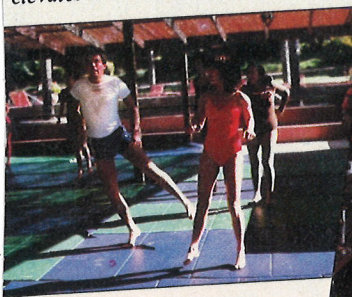


The hardest part of any fitness program is making it last. We came home determined to exercise regularly and continue early morning walks. But somehow reality soon crept in and along with it, the excuses: It's too cold. One of us has a meeting; the other a deadline. Still, our Ranch weekend gave us a new awareness: Though it's no substitute for a scheduled regimen, you can exercise without "officially" exercising:

- Tie your shoes with legs straight, either with both feet on the floor or with one foot raised to dresser or sink level, in both cases bending at the waist.
- Try not to use a step stool to reach high spots. Stretching the entire body slims the midriff—and sometimes even adds height!
- When stirring food, use the entire upper portion of your body, and switch hands. Tightening stomach and buttocks is a good isometric for those areas, too.
- Your kitchen sink—most are about the same height as a ballet bar—offers possibilities for muscle-toning leg kicks, knee bends and body stretches. *(Continued)*



stepping to strains of Donna Summer elevates exercise to a new level...



even in your own living room!



DANCING

Of the many offerings from the Ranch's exercise menu, the dance/exercise classes are among the easiest to adapt at home. Just put on a record you can't sit still to. You don't really have to know steps—just try to work different muscles by

varying your movements. Do ten to thirty repetitions (depending on your stamina!)—jumping jacks, lunges, body twists, shoulder shrugs, running in place, touching toes, lifting and scissoring legs, kicking

boxing—anything you can think of that keeps you going. Always alternate very vigorous movements, like jumping jacks, with calmer ones—they'll give you a chance to catch your breath. Do it for 20 minutes at first; work up to 45 if you can.

bending both bodies.

- Stand face to face and palm to palm, feet shoulder-width apart, leaning in slightly. Take turns being the leader, slowly orchestrating the movements of both bodies, while the partner provides resistance. It's

a form of isometrics. Do it to your favorite mellow music—it's an experience.

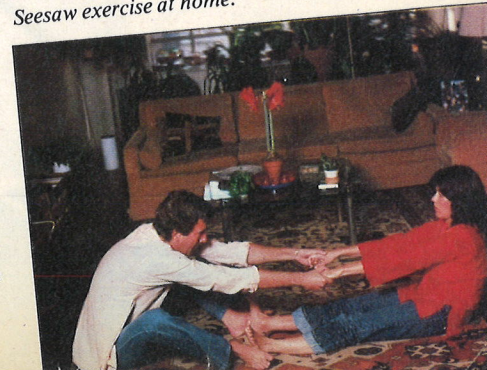
- Sit down back to back and link arms. Try to get up. It's good for balance and leg muscles—much harder if you're very different sizes.

- This is terrific for the

stomach—if neither person has a back problem. Attach a two-foot piece of heavy rope to the middle of two metal pipes (also about two feet long). Sit facing one another, legs straight. Take turns pulling and resisting, bending at the waist as you

seesaw up and down. The same seesaw exercise can be done without the rope apparatus, but the taller person may have to bend knees. Do once or twice at first.

Seesaw exercise at home.



FOOD



Most of the food at the Ranch is vegetarian (fish, two or three times a week), calorie-controlled (1,000 a day unless you eat “no-no’s”) low sodium and low cholesterol. You can’t take the food with you—but the philosophy goes a long way:

- Eat portions in keeping with your size. A 120-pounder simply shouldn’t eat as much as someone who’s twice as heavy.
- Substitute “psychological” calories for real ones—good conversation, pleasurable surroundings and appealing garnishes aren’t fattening.
- Eat slowly and not at your desk or in front of the TV, where you’re apt to ignore the sensual pleasure of eating.
- Plan your meals at breakfast, which should be light—about 15% of the day’s calories—since you just woke up. If a large lunch is coming up, plan a light dinner and vice versa.
- Earn your weekends, rather than punishing yourself all week after. If you know you’re in for heavy eating and drinking, eat light meals during the preceding week.
- Deborah Mazzanti stresses the importance of identifying with your food:
“You will be what you eat— and who wants to look like a doughnut!”

