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Program Manager Spotlighted in the Oregonian

By Nancy Dow • June 17, 2002

Wendy Mitchell, 57, Portland

Stats: 5 feet 2 inches; 112 pounds

Then and now:

Mitchell was born in Massachusetts, raised in Santa Barbara, California, and spent 20 years in Berkeley, California. She's lived in Oregon for four years. She holds a master's degree in psychology and works as program manager for the Center for Women's Health at Oregon Health & Science University. She and her husband, Raymond, a marriage therapist, have been married 26 years. They have a 22-year-old daughter.

Fitness history:

Mitchell was a dance major at the University of California at Los Angeles in the early '60s. She's done tap, folk, modern and interpretive dance. She also was introduced to yoga, tai chi, and meditation in college and attended a lot of workshops at Esalen. She's always been interested in movement and in the search for a sense of well-being. As she's gotten older she's moved away from exercise that's hard on the body and looked toward gentler practices such as yoga.

Current workout:

"I'm very committed to 'aging gracefully.' At this point in my life I have found that a daily practice of yoga, weight lifting and walking keeps me flexible, strong and balanced." Mitchell starts every day with Rodney Yee's 20-minute video, "A.M. Yoga for Beginners." Flowers and candles make her exercise space inviting. At the end of the tape she practices a short meditation. She then works with hand and leg weights



ROGER JENSEN/THE OREGONIAN
Wendy Mitchell starts the day with a 20-minute video, "A.M. Yoga for Beginners." She practices a short meditation.

for 12 minutes and ~~for beginners,~~ then practices a short meditation. throws in some exercises for her stomach muscles. Twelve minutes of step aerobics follows while she watches "The Today Show." Evenings and weekends she takes a brisk 35-minute walk in the park with her neighbor. "All of it needs to be fun. You have to enjoy it to keep at it." Mitchell and her husband also are starting to leave the car at home more often in favor of public transportation.

Payoff:

"My workout is really a personal ritual. By doing it regularly I have found that it consistently provides me an initial grounding that eases daily stress," She also likes the ease and simplicity of working out at home.

Recommended reading:

Mitchell recommends "Strong Women Stay Young" by Miriam Nelson of Tufts University.

Best advice:

"If a workout is too hard or expensive or gets in the way, you'll find an excuse not to do it. And it's important to move, every day."

Diet:

Breakfast is a protein drink along with 17 (she counts them out) almonds, which Mitchell likes for their effect on arthritis as well as her cholesterol level. She eats her biggest meal at midday: chicken or fish with vegetables. Dinner is usually salad with cheese and fruit. Mitchell says she sleeps better when she eats less for dinner.

Her diet downfall:

Hot fudge sundaes. "I try to treat myself well and not get overly compulsive about food."

**Center of Excellence
in Women's Health**

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