

LETTERS FROM GRANDPA

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Dearest grandchild,

Today's letter will deal with Dr. Kenneth Cooper. Many years ago I was privileged to do an hour long interview him which was played over KOBC radio in Joplin, Mo. Dr. Cooper is famous for writing a book on Aerobics. He states that you must have three things in order to have good health (1) A good heart (2) Good lungs (3) and a good circulatory system. The way to get all three is by aerobic exercise! That is, you must exercise with enough vigor to accelerate the activity of your heart and lungs, which will consequently help keep your arteries clear.

Dr. Cooper wrote his aerobics book when he was a physician in the U.S. Air Force. It has sold 30 million copies and been translated into 41 languages. He has practiced what he preaches and maintains excellent health in his late 80's. He has maintained the same weight for 60 years (168 lbs.). He has climbed Mount Rainier twice, Mount Fuji once, and been to Antarctica three times. After 40 years of running he broke his knee while skiing in 2004. He continues his aerobic exercise now by walking and riding a stationary bike.

Famous athletes and politicians have visited his clinic and sought his advice. For some time famous quarterback Roger Staubach held the clinic record for performance on the tread mill. When the record was broken by an NFL referee Dr. Cooper couldn't wait to call Roger. As I recall, Staubach inquired who it was that had broken his record? When Dr. Cooper told him, there was a long pause . . . then Roger said: "Well, he still can't see!".

Dr. Cooper is a devout Christian and shared a self deprecating story about giving his testimony at a Billy Graham Crusade in Brazil. He said that he received a phone call at his office out of the clear blue sky. It was the Billy Graham organization notifying him when and where he was to give his testimony. Dr. Cooper was outraged at their audacity and emphatically declined. When examining his next patient, however, he was so visibly affected that his patient said: "All you all right doctor?" It was then that Dr. Cooper swallowed his pride, called back, and accepted the invitation.

Dr. Cooper said that when Mr. Texas came to his clinic he was surprised by his lack of stamina. Dr. Cooper told our radio audience that his own wife was in better health than this muscle bound man. It is not at all uncommon, as you know, for men with bulging muscles to die of blocked arteries and heart failure. Remember that good health is not determined by muscles but by a good heart, good lungs, and a good circulatory system. As we have said, you only develop all three by aerobic exercise.

Dr. Cooper is credited with motivating more people to exercise in pursuit of good health than any other person. He has long advocated prevention of disease rather than treatment. He believes that it is easier to maintain good health through proper exercise, diet, and emotional balance than to regain your health once it is lost. Dr. Cooper has lectured in 50 different countries and has written 18 more books after his original best seller. He is perhaps most famous in Brazil where he helped train their national soccer team to a World Cup Victory in 1970. His exercise program even created a new word in Portuguese. "Aerobic exercise" in Portuguese is "coopering".

Dr. Cooper has also positively impacted the American diet. He collaborated with PepsiCo to eliminate trans fats from its Frito-Lay snack line. This started an international wave that other

companies have followed. Dr. Cooper believes that fitness is a journey, not a destination. It is not something you do “occasionally”, but something you do “consistently” for your entire life.

There is, of course, a spiritual application to this philosophy. Paul told Timothy: **“Train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come” (1 Tim. 4:7,8).**

One trip to the gym does not create a healthy body and one trip to church does not create a healthy soul. Spiritual health is also a “journey” and not a “destination”. A disciplined regimen of church attendance, Bible study and prayer will produce spiritual health, but not immediately. Just as your aerobic exercise can eventually help you climb a mountain, so also your spiritual exercise can also do the same in a spiritual sense. It is a life time of spiritual exercise that will enable you to run and not grow weary, and to walk and not faint (Is. 40:31).

As we have said, church attendance, Bible study, and prayer are three essentials to spiritual health. There is no better day than today to start your spiritual exercise! Someday you will be glad you did!

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce