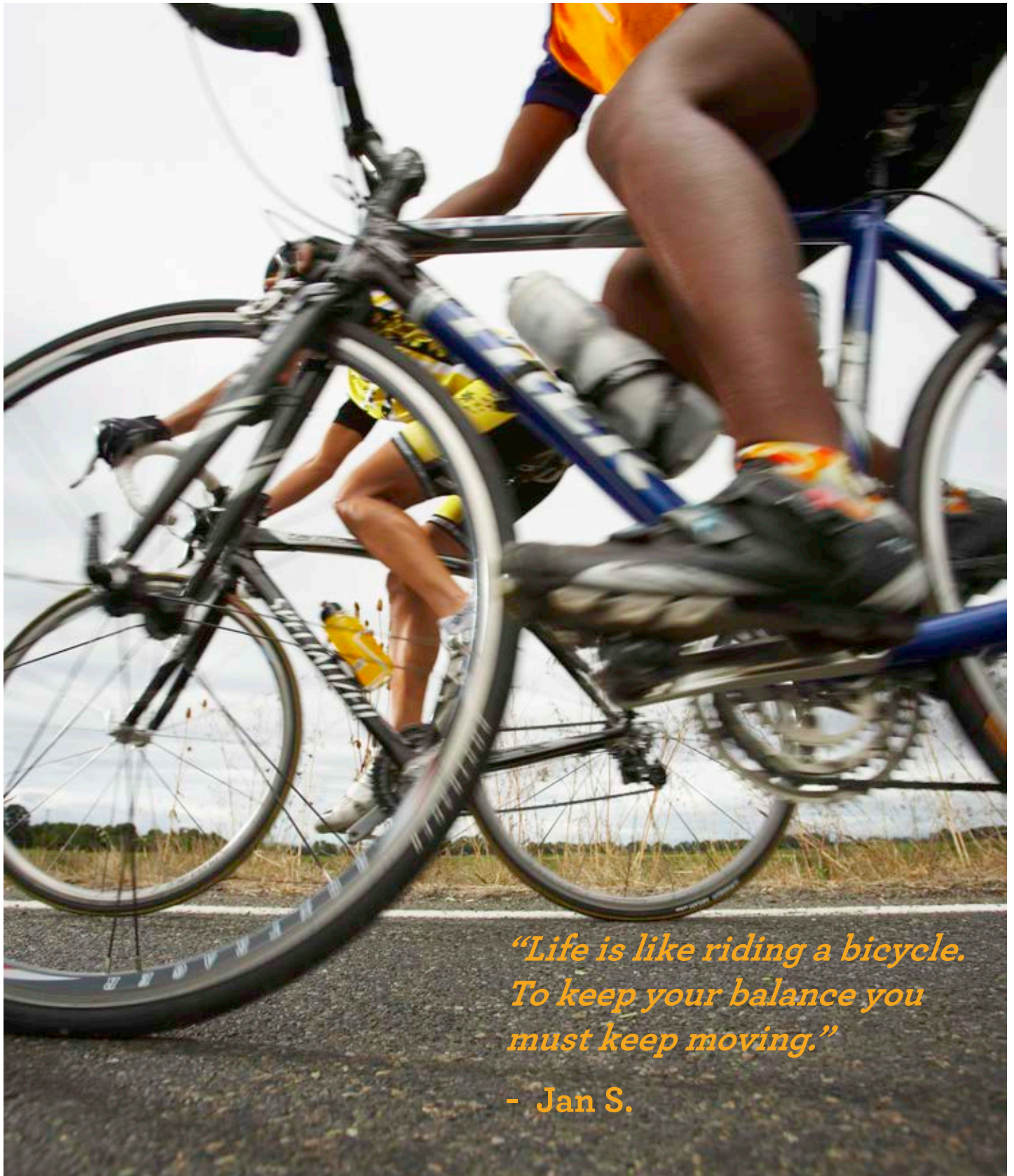


# Mindful Physical Activity: The Why I Move Project



*“Life is like riding a bicycle.  
To keep your balance you  
must keep moving.”*

- Jan S.

As the sparkle of New Year's resolutions begins to fade and the reality of our clients' lives begins to take over, how do you help clients keep moving for the rest of the year?

Exercise professionals and fitness leaders do a very good job of providing detailed exercise prescriptions and workout routines. We are also well versed in describing how to do a proper pull-up and squat and when to take a rest day. The WHAT and the HOW of physical activity come easily to us. Yet, physical activity doesn't necessarily come easily to our clients. If we take a step back and listen to our clients, what are they telling us?

Have our clients spoken of WHY they want to perform several sets of mountain climbers? Or WHY they are attending not one but all of our indoor cycling classes? Or even WHY they are willing to take an hour for themselves most days of the week to exercise?

To quote author Simon Sinek, "Start with Why."

Asking this powerful question, we can gain insight into the extraordinary reasons WHY our clients continue to want to move, need to move, and are moving. When we dig a little deeper it often goes beyond the known benefits of physical activity. As the benefits we tend to give are static and not necessarily personal for each client, asking our clients WHY they move provides much better personal motivation.

## Development of the Why I Move Project

Tamara Vineberg questioned the idea of being physically active until she watched Dr. Mike Evan's YouTube sensation, "23 and 1/2 hours: What is the single best thing we can do for our health?" ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUaInS6HIGo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aUaInS6HIGo)). She had a change in attitude that resulted in a regular exercise routine that she continues to this day.

Because of stories like these and with my credential as a Certified Exercise Physiologist, I launched a new website to encourage mindful physical activity by asking the question, "WHY?"

A social experiment, **whymove.com** is an interactive website that provides real-life inspirational stories about everyday

people's reasons for moving. Not just at the beginning of a new year but throughout the entire year.

Tamara submitted her reason WHY along with many other Canadians since the website's inception in the fall of 2013.

## Inspirational Stories

Since whymove.com's inception, over 100 original stories have been posted. Here are three examples:

"I move because it is exhilarating. I feel alive, strong, capable, and energized. It brings me into the present moment and connects me back to myself and others."

- Chelsea C.

"Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance you must keep moving."

- Jan S.

"What I want to say to others is: run for sport, run for health, run for a cause, run for fun, run alone, or run in a crowd. Running is personal and can be shared at the same time. When we run, it doesn't matter how much money we have in the bank or what car we drive. When we run, our age, gender, race, and sexual orientation do not matter. When we run, we are all the same."

- Kory V.

These three quotes shed light on the various reasons WHY we move. The website is an open space to share and inspire others to make the change to move more, being mindful and conscious of WHY we move. It is stories of people recognizing the benefit for themselves, not a clinical list of benefits. Stories are powerful, make personal connections, and are thought provoking, keeping physical activity behaviour on the priority list.

Inspirational stories not only provide context for the individual, but they can also provide examples for those who are not physically active. The goal of the Why I Move project is to share all reasons WHY but also to provide a forum and database of hundreds of stories to inspire and motivate others to start moving or start moving more.

## How to Get Involved in the Why I Move Movement — A Call to Action

### What next?

As the site is a social experiment built to reach many, I encourage you to share the website with at least three clients, particularly those who are struggling to adhere to a regular routine. The chance to read others' stories might help them find their WHY, too. All website visitors are also welcome to answer physical activity polls and are directed to free resources to help them move more.

Submit your reason WHY. All submissions are welcome, be it written text, pictures, and/or videos. You may come up with more than one reason WHY, so why not share them all?

Contact us if you have an event you think would benefit from the *Why I Move* project. Collaboration and physical activity promotion are part of our overall mission, so let us know if we can lend a hand in getting more people moving.

### Start Asking Why

When addressing your clients' unmet New Year's resolutions, take the time to discuss their motivations and reason(s) WHY they are exercising. It might be the conversation your clients need to assist in making physical activity a mainstay in their life.

—Lisa Workman, MA, BPE, CSEP-CEP, EIMC Level 2, AFLCA Trainer [www.lisaworkman.com](http://www.lisaworkman.com)

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