



# I'm SO BORED with My EXERCISE ROUTINE –

## What Can I Do to Spice it up?

by Julia C. Karlstad, MEd, CSCS

*DISCLAIMER: To develop an exercise program that best suits your needs, please consult with your physician. It is important to talk with your doctor before beginning any exercise program.*

I am so bored with my workout, especially the cardio; it is so boring! I have to drag myself from the bed, couch or desk in order to even attempt to get my workout in. I used to get excited about the music I listened to, but even my playlists on my iPod are really getting old.

When I prepare for my workout it is pretty much a mournful saga. I plop myself on the kitchen chair, throw my tennis shoes on the ground, drudgingly place one foot in each shoe, woefully lace them up and with a vengeance, drag myself to the gym.

Now, don't get me wrong. I always feel good after my workout, but the preparation to get there and even the workout itself is a major drag! It is like, "here we go again, you know you have to do this, so get your rear in gear and move!" It is just such a chore anymore to get there. I need some spice in my workout! I need something that will create a positive experience and foster more motivation in my exercise routine.

**Try these five tips to add a little spark to your routine and break away from BOREDOM!**

### 1. Try something new.

There are so many different workouts and many of them do not feel like exercise at all! Break away from your traditional/monotonous routine and sign-up for something new. Join a group class such as Zumba, kickboxing, TRX, boot camp, Pilates or yoga. Pick-up and learn a new sport; try something like kayaking, golfing, hiking, bowling, cycling, field hockey, rugby, soccer or even a dance class. Accomplishing something new is extremely liberating and will definitely spice up a workout! And you never know, this new activity may be the key to keeping you consistent because you will enjoy it so much.

### 2. Hire a personal trainer.

You would be surprised how much a trainer can add zest to your workouts! They will bring new workouts to each training session and constantly keep you motivated to stick to your health and fitness goals. The different workouts will definitely help you break out of that old boring routine. A personal trainer will bring new exercises to each session which will help keep each workout interesting and challenging. Sometimes their positive attitude, in conjunction with pushing you through a challenging workout, can really help positively turn around your entire day.

### 3. Train for an event.

Training for an event will definitely help spark some consistency and accountability. Most people tend to be more motivated and will stick to their schedules better when they have a plan or a goal. The same is true with exercise. If you have a goal or an event that you're training for, you will tend to stick to your workout routine and it is always fun to track and physically see how your body is progressing in fitness. There are several different events you could train for and here is a quick list to give you an idea of what is out there: 5K race, 10K race, cycling race (several distances available), half or full marathon, triathlon, adventure race, duathlon (combination of running and biking) or a half or full Ironman.

### 4. Train with a heart rate monitor.

I often tell my clients, "If you are not heart rate training, you are aimlessly training!" The reason I say this is because if you are not tracking your heart rate, you really do not know at what kind of intensity you are exercising. Plus, you have nothing to monitor how you are progressing with your cardio workouts. It is also a wonderful way to add variety to your workouts. So go purchase a heart rate monitor and then start doing your cardio workouts at different intensity levels based upon your heart rate.

For example, a 55 minute workout might look something like this:

- You start with a five minute warm-up.
- Then for 15 minutes, you will monitor your intensity to keep your heart rate between 115 and 130 beats per minute (bpm).
- You will then increase your intensity and keep your heart rate between 130 and 145 bpm for 15 minutes; then increase your heart rate for another 15 minutes keeping your heart rate above 145 bpm.
- Finally, finish up with a five minute cool-down (slow down your intensity so that your heart rate is below 120 bpm).

This is just one example of how you can use heart rate training for your cardio workouts. This adds variety because you are constantly in tune with your heart rate and overall intensity. Plus, you are paying more attention to your heart rate so you simply will not have as much time to think about how boring the workout may have been.

## 5. Add a balance challenge.

Balance becomes more and more important as we age and is often overlooked in some workouts. You can increase the difficulty in any workout by adding a balance challenge. Try doing squats or lunges on a BOSU balance trainer or a stability disc pillow. Do some exercises while standing on one leg (like a dumbbell bicep curl) and you will automatically recruit more core muscles to help stabilize and keep your balance. Try doing some of your exercise with more of a balance focus and you will soon see how this can add a whole new dynamic to your routine. Plus you will be creating a strong core (this is critical for good posture, bone health and balance in general).



So stop dragging yourself to the gym and try one of these five things to add some more variety to your workouts. Exercise can be a lot of fun if you pair it with the right combination. Maybe even try one of these things with your friends and/or family! Exercise as a social event can be a good way to spend time with friends and family and get fit at the same time.

### ***About the Author:***

*Julia C. Karlstad, MEd, CSCS, is the president of JKFITNESS, LLC. Julia has worked in the fitness industry and specifically the medical wellness community for several years. Previously, Julia developed and directed an exercise physiology program for two bariatric hospitals and three medically supervised weight-loss clinics. She currently serves on the OAC Advisory Board. For more information on Julia, please visit [www.juliakarlstad.com](http://www.juliakarlstad.com) or [www.jk-fit.com](http://www.jk-fit.com).*



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The Obesity Action Coalition (OAC) is a National non-profit organization dedicated to giving a voice to individuals affected by obesity and helping them along their journey toward better health. Our core focuses are to elevate the conversation of weight and its impact on health, improve access to obesity care, provide science-based education on obesity and its treatments, and fight to eliminate weight bias and discrimination.



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