

Effective
Training with
Older
Populations in
Health Club and
Gym Settings



Best Practices and
Lessons Learned

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July 31, 2025

Background

- Started @ S.H.C December 2023
- Personal Trainer
- Cooper Tracks© Program Inst.
 - CVD
 - Arthritis*
 - Diabetes*
 - Cancer



Key Factors For Training Older Adults



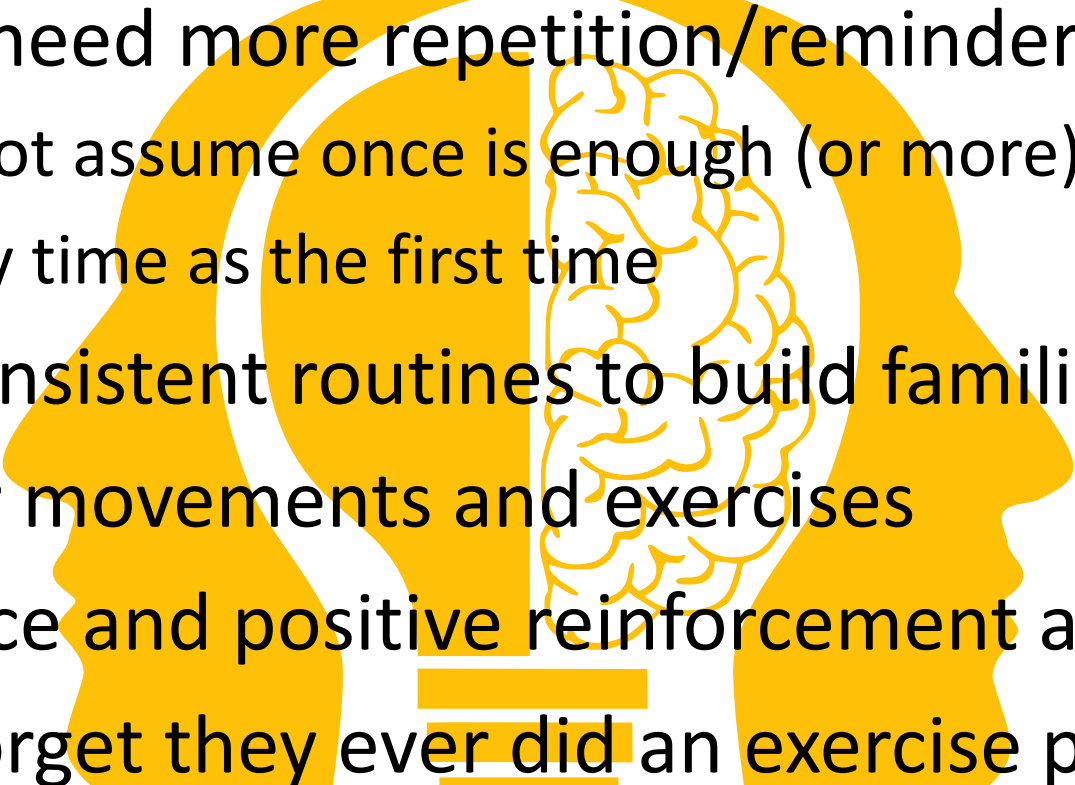
- Generational Differences
- Memory Matters
- Focus & Concentration
- Language & Terminology
- Effective Demonstration
- Physical Limitations

Generational Differences

- Independence vs autonomy
 - I can do this by myself, don't need help
- Physical activity vs exercise needs
 - Why do I need to exercise at a gym?
- Health Belief Model
 - I care about my health
 - I can control my health
 - Exercise and PA will help with my health goals
- Trust in QEPs ability to help them
 - Rapport
 - Collaborate
 - Listen
 - Adapt

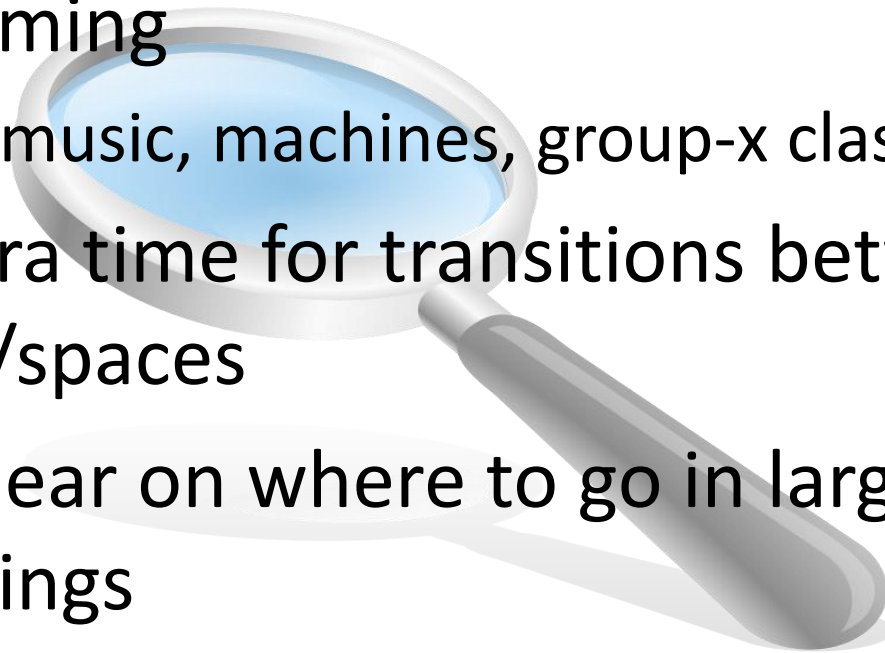


Memory

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- Often need more repetition/reminders
 - Do not assume once is enough (or more)
 - Every time as the first time
 - Use consistent routines to build familiarity
 - Similar movements and exercises
 - Patience and positive reinforcement are key
 - May forget they ever did an exercise prior

Focus & Concentration

- Distractions in busy gym environments can be overwhelming
 - People, music, machines, group-x classes etc.
- Allow extra time for transitions between exercises/spaces
- Be very clear on where to go in larger spaces and buildings
 - Avoid getting lost or separated from group

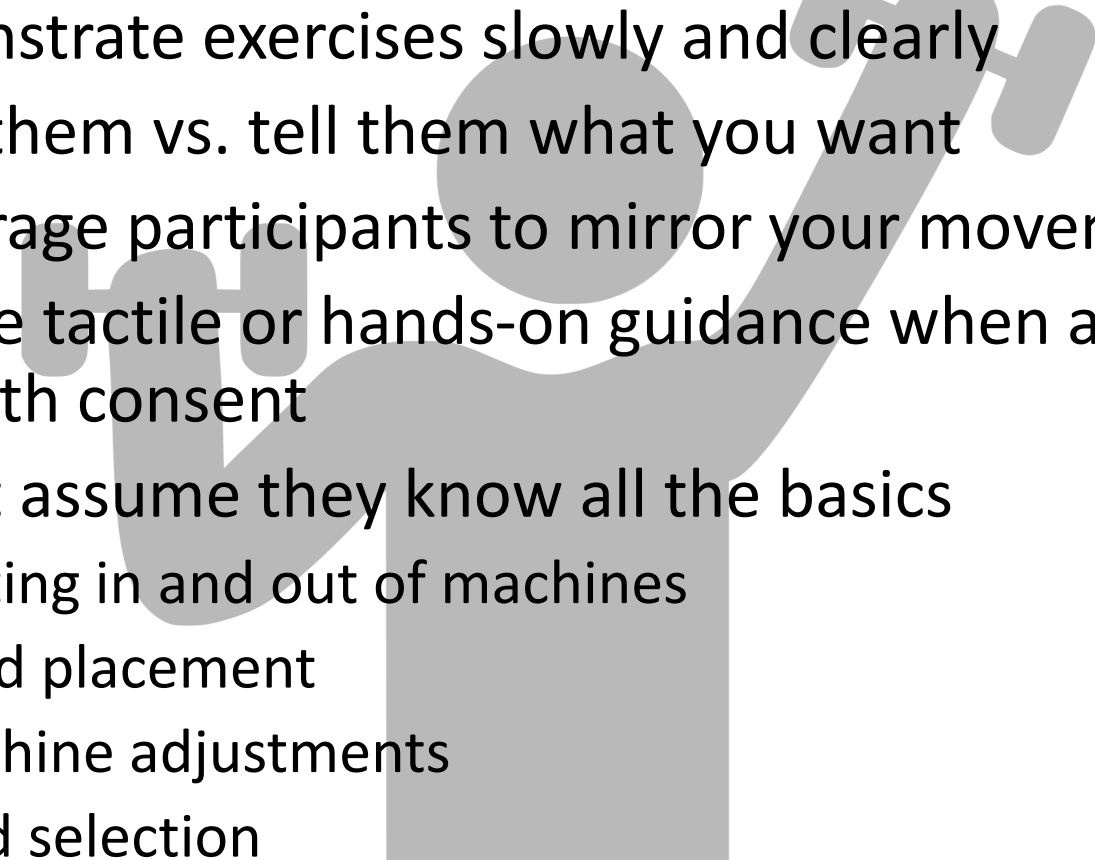


Language & Terminology

- Avoid jargon or any technical fitness terms
- Use plain language and relatable analogies
- Confirm understanding without being condescending
- Encourage questions and feedback
- Use short, simple, concise instructions
- One speaker at a time



Effective Demonstrations

- Demonstrate exercises slowly and clearly
 - Show them vs. tell them what you want
 - Encourage participants to mirror your movements
 - Provide tactile or hands-on guidance when appropriate and with consent
 - Do not assume they know all the basics
 - Getting in and out of machines
 - Hand placement
 - Machine adjustments
 - Load selection
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Physical Limitations

- Be aware of common conditions (arthritis, osteoporosis, balance issues, operations, etc.)
- Modify exercises to reduce risk and increase accessibility
- Monitor for signs of fatigue, pain, or undue discomfort
- Emphasize functional fitness and independence
- Prioritize technique/ROM mastery over more load and speed

Questions & Contact



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