

Chatting with The Good Dr. Laura Shook
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Once upon a time (about 30 years ago) in a land far far away (California) a much younger me trained in the martial art of Aikido. During the years I spent in the dojo (Training Hall or "Place of the Tao") I learned, among other things, to feel my center of gravity and to meet the ground gracefully when I fall. Yes, when I fall, for you see, gravity is a powerful and unrelenting force. Drop your guard and down you go.

A fall can skin your knee, jam your joints or break your bones. For some people, this will result in flowery curses, the application of band-aids and a trip to the chiropractor. But for others, especially people over the age of 65, falling is the most common life-threatening hazard which can permanently alter mobility and independence. Fortunately within the human body there are systems in place to help us deal with the forces of gravity. YES, you know what I'm talking about, balance and muscle tone. And just like with the rest of your body, *use it or loose it*.

Here is a test: Can you stand on one foot for 15-30 seconds? Yes! Excellent, stay strong, exercise regularly, eat well, sing, dance, play and wear practical shoes. If you found yourself a bit wobbly it might be time for you to explore the many options available to you for improving your balance and muscle tone.

- Contact your chiropractor or medical doctor for recommendations specific to your own health and body.
- Check out the local gyms for classes to develop strength and flexibility.
- Check out Grace Wu Kunfu School on N. St Francis for classes in Kunfu and Tai Chi. For more information call (316) 264-9640.
- Check out Health Strategies on Hillside for their class *I Won't Fall For You! A Fall Avoidance Program* that meets 2 times a week for 12 weeks. For more information call (316) 962-8015.
- Check out *How to Prevent Falls: Better Balance, Independence and Energy in 6 Simple Steps*, a book by Betty Perkins-Carpenter, Wes Fox, Jim Whiting and Dick Roberts.
- Check out *Healing Moves, How To Cure, Relieve, and Prevent Common Ailments With Exercise*, a book By Carol Krucoff and Mitchell Krucoff, MD
- If you are computer savvy type balance into a Google search.

Remember, a wobbly stance, weak muscles and creaky joints can lead to tumbling, falling and breaking like an egg. Whereas a good sense of balance and a healthy dose of strength and flexibility will keep you ready to Rock-n-Roll.

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