



“Wow – it’s great to be alive!” is what Stan Biram says to himself each day when he gets up.

Stan makes activity a daily part of his life. Each day he starts with Tai Chi, then goes for a daily walk, climbs stairs in his condo (about 150-200 stairs), proceeds to the workout room and rides the stationary bike for 10 minutes, the rowing machine for 10 minutes, and finishes off with sit ups, push ups and sometimes even chin-ups.

To most it is obvious that Stan is a very active adult – and he is – but what’s different is that Stan is 85 years old!

After having a severe heart attack 21 years ago and the doctor giving him only 3 – 6 months to live, Stan decided to oppose death with all the strength he had. *“I chose life!”* he said. Stan’s doctor recommended a supervised program of climbing stairs to improve his physical health and Tai Chi to improve his mental health and reduce stress in his life. Activity then became a part of Stan’s life and after only a few short years, doctors were amazed to find that his heart had actually grown five new arteries which doctors call collateral healing.

Stan and his wife became so involved in Tai Chi that they both became certified instructors in 1992.

After losing his wife of 61 years in February, 2006, Stan moved back to Saskatoon from Victoria where he had been living for a number of years. Born in Wolsely, Saskatchewan, Stan realized he missed the prairie skies and looked forward to being closer to his family. During this period time, Stan took 6 months off from exercising regularly and found that his angina was returning. This was a wake-up call and Stan very quickly resumed his physical activity.

Today at age 85, Stan lives and breathes the benefits of physical activity. He continues on his daily routine and has incorporated even more activity into his life. Although he does not recommend that others do this, Stan has placed up to 17 small carpets throughout his condo about 2 feet apart. Instead of walking on his floor, he only steps on the small mats. Stan says, “I don’t step on my floor, but sort of leap or do a dance step from mat to mat throughout my apartment. This keeps not only my body moving but my mind active and working all the time because it takes practice.”

Susan who is a close family member has said, “I visit Stan every day, partly because he needs me, but mostly because I need him. He is an inspiration that I would love to share with this city.”

When asked what Stan says to other older adults, he tells them “If you don’t want to do it, do it anyway” and “integrate activity into your daily life, take care of your outer self and your inner self”.