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## Energy Express by Marilyn Preston

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### Blue is the New Green and Other Healthy Trends for 2008

I've always liked predictions, even the ones I'm hoping won't hurt, like the Mayan kiss-this-world-goodbye prediction due to come true in December 2012. Healthy lifestyle predictions are my favorites. (They never hurt anybody.) Here's a colorful one from the director of trend-spotting at JWT, the largest ad agency in the U.S. Her name is Ann Mack — just in case she wants to become a brand herself — and her message for 2008 is "blue is the new green."

Say what? I read with interest: "People worldwide understand that climate is all about the seas and the sky -both blue. Watch for 'green' to become a subset of 'blue,' which is coming to denote the much larger energizing spirit of good citizen ethics."

Good citizen ethics? Tread lightly in the gym and leave no mess. Help a fellow cyclist struggling to change a tire. Run a 10K to help raise money for your favorite worthy or lost cause. I believe these trends will continue in 2008, no matter who wins the White House, and I'd be ashamed of us if they didn't.

Cooperative Consumption is another trend Mack is reporting, and that too fits into the Wikipedia definition of living a healthy lifestyle: Share cars. Share bicycles. Share personal trainers or organic cooks or community vegetable gardens. This is happening more and more, in cities and countries around the world, flattening the globe but strengthening our ties.

Here are a few more trendy predictions for 2008, reported by the American Council on Exercise (ACE), the result of a worldwide survey of personal trainers and fitness specialists:

1. DANCING IS HOT. Gyms are not for everyone. But dancing is. Hip-hop, ballroom, Latin and country line are all trending up. And so is boxing, another nontraditional workout that feels like fun and doesn't have to kill you if you're really careful.

2. EXERCISE MIND-BODY CONNECTION. Spin yoga! Pilates fusion! Mindful mahjong! Activities that blend breath work and meditation into traditional activities are more popular than ever. When I see ads for Doga classes — yoga for dogs — I know this mind-body trend is barking up the right tree.

3. TECHNOLOGY-BASED WORKOUTS. More people are opting to train using high-tech fitness programs downloadable to their iPods, PDAs, and home computers. I'm happy to report the trend — whatever floats your boat — but personally, I prefer non-tech when it comes to exercising. I'm not motivated by all that number-crunching, and I know my brain is happier when I detach from outside stimulation and give it a little rest. So is yours.

4. PERSONAL TRAINING. ACE reports 93 percent of fitness pros

surveyed said personal trainers will be more accessible in 2008. It's one of the fastest growing professions, and the more people in training or sharing trainers (see Cooperative Consumption above), the lower our cost of medical care going forward. Yippee!

Q&A: Want To Strengthen Your Feet? Try Yoga Toes

Dear Marilyn: I've got a biomechanical issue that affects my running gait. My left big toe keeps hitting the top of the shoe, producing pain afterward. My chiropractor recommends time on the Bosu Ball platform. Any other ideas? — E-mail from Brian S.

The Bosu Ball platform is a good tool for improving balance and core strength, and if that's what your chiropractor recommends, I'd hop to it. And I have two more good ideas for you. First, what about opening a small hole in the top of your shoe so your big toe doesn't hit? That should reduce the pain significantly. Second, look into a product called Yoga Toes. It's a rubbery gel mold that slips between each toe and holds them in line, and over time, by stretching and strengthening your foot muscles, you can realign the bones of your feet. I first heard about Yoga Toes in yoga class, where well-spaced toes and strong, sensitive feet are as highly prized as open hips and relaxed shoulders. I'm wearing a pair as I type — hoping to correct bunion bulge — and my toes have been thanking me ever since. Strong feet are happy feet and help prevent injuries in all sports. You can read more about Yoga Toes at [www.yogapro.com](http://www.yogapro.com).

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"Instead of focusing on a future flatter stomach or tighter tush, view your workout as an opportunity to be awake in your life today." — James Gavin, Ph.D., sports psychologist

Marilynn Preston — fitness expert, personal trainer and speaker on healthy lifestyle issues — is the creator of Energy Express, the longest-running syndicated fitness column in the country. She welcomes reader questions, which can be sent to MyEnergyExpress@aol.com. To find out more about Preston and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate website at www.creators.com.

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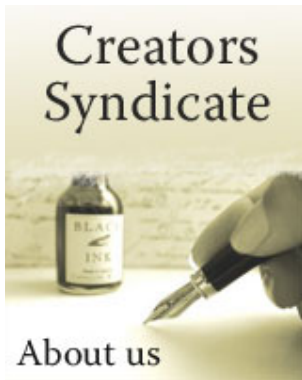
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