

# Health and pe



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

It's Good to be the King Living the life of the king on the beautiful tropical island of tuba-tuba is fantastic because you get all the best food and have access to all the leisure and entertainment activities available.

Unfortunately, you can only be the king for as long as the food is plentiful and the people are slim. Since this has usually been a problem on the island, kings aren't kings for very long. That's why, when I was listening to the radio and heard the big city doctor say that the only 'real' way to keep weight off was to exercise, I knew what I had to do. But how could I go about getting my people to exercise hard enough to start keeping weight off before I was replaced as King? I only had time to make about one Royal Decree before the official Weight and See Dinner to see whether I would stay king. If the people had more weight on them than the last Weight and See Dinner, I would need to start looking for another profession. After a lot of heavy thinking and finally falling asleep without a solution, I woke up the next morning with the perfect answer, dance!

Instead of forcing my people to participate in strenuous activity, something none of them were necessarily naturally inclined to do, I simply performed a very active "Dance of Thanksgiving" in front of my astonished assembly just as breakfast was being served. After breakfast, I stood up and performed another dance, the "Dance of Satisfaction", which was slower because my full belly just wanted to stretch. I did this same activity before brunch, lunch, the afternoon tea buffet, dinner and nighttime feast. I had so much fun doing it that I could help laughing through some of the dances and, by lunch, some of my people were looking more interested than shocked. By the nighttime feast, about half of them were joining me in the dances. By lunch the next day, everyone was dancing in wild movements of celebration before each

meal and slower dances after each meal. By the third day, I caught my people dancing randomly during their other daily tasks just for the joy of movement.

This was the perfect solution to the problem for many reasons. First, my people were participating in strenuous activity completely voluntarily, so they didn't resent me for imposing a new rule and they didn't resent the activity as something that they had to squeeze in between their other daily activities.

Second, dancing is fun and it makes your body feel good, which is itself an encouragement to keep doing it. It also made the food preparers feel good because we were thanking them, which also brought in the social element of ritual, and letting them know how much we appreciated their food, so they made better food for us and made all of us want to keep the food preparers happy in this way.

Third, because everyone was doing it all the time, the people who were slower to join in eventually couldn't help themselves and were dancing, too. This meant even the most inactive person was being active at least three times a day and stretching three times a day for at least 10 minutes each time. I think my big city doctor friend on the radio called this the peer pressure effect.

Fourth, although I set the pace of the dances, I didn't set the form of the dances, so each person was able to dance in whatever way they liked as long as they kept to the tempo of the group. People who weren't sure how to dance just followed other people who had no problem with this and then made adaptations to suit their own personality. So the people who are not as limber were able to participate as much as the most active people and didn't

feel left behind or incompetent, so they didn't feel self-conscious about participating.

Finally, and best for me, at the Weight and See Dinner, it was proved that everyone had lost some weight even though they were feeling better than ever and had eaten the best food of their lives. A new tradition was born and an old one, the one about the King being replaced if the people gained weight, was abandoned.