

# Exploring Wellbeing

## Session 2 body: be active



It's really important to keep physically active. It's not just essential for our body, but it's great – and essential - for our mind too. [Research](#) shows that exercise can improve your mood and reduce feelings of depression and anxiety. It can increase your energy levels, help control pain level and improve the quality of your sleep.

*“If you are in a bad mood go for a walk. If you are still in a bad mood, go for another walk” - Hippocrates*



Not convinced? [Watch this funny video by the wonderful Dr Mike Evans](#), an Associate Professor of Family Medicine at the University of Toronto.

### How you CAN stay active?

Take inspiration from [The Blue Zones](#). Basically the Blue Zones are five regions in the world with the highest concentration of people living to age 100. Researchers wanted to know what



their secret to longevity and a happy, healthy life was. And guess what they found? Nope, it wasn't daily Zumba or gym sessions... In fact, what researchers discovered was that **physical movement was a natural part of people's lives**: few of these happy centenarians did 'structured exercise'. What they did do, though, was move throughout the day naturally – they walked

everywhere, gardened regularly, and performed chores around the house with enthusiasm! Scientists call this N.E.A.T. or Non-Exercise Activity Thermogenesis - a fancy way of saying 'all movement counts'. In simple terms, [if we sit less and move more, we live longer](#). Weeding the garden, mopping the floors, walking around the block ... it all counts.



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**Your challenge!** Can you spend just 23 1/2 hours sitting and sleeping?!

**How much exercise should you do? The magic number** [Thirty minutes a day is a great start!](#) And the good news? It doesn't have to be all in one go – try three x 10-minute sessions, if you prefer. Over the next week try one or more of these activities and come back next week ready to share how you got on - good, bad or ugly!

1. Join a local [walking group](#)
2. Make your day harder - watch this short [video](#) for ideas
3. Your choice; dance, cycle, garden, whatever! get moving! Look at this week's recommended websites for inspiration

**Activity Fit:** How to find the right activity for you

We are all different and what suits one person might not suit someone else, so we need to figure out what works for us. Here are some pointers to help you find the right activity.

Positive incentives - the more these apply the more likely you are to stick with it:

1. The activity feels natural to me
2. I enjoy doing this activity
3. I value doing this activity, and will still do it even if I am not enjoying it

Negative incentives - if these are your main drivers you are less likely to stick with it:.

1. I feel ashamed or guilty if I do not do this
2. I only do this because someone else wants me to do this

And remember: try and make time to do something active each day that's fun for you and that you enjoy (or at least enjoy the feeling of accomplishing it afterwards!). Something is better than nothing.

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Want to learn more? Check these websites out.



[30 fun ways to get 30 minutes exercise](#)



[Eat Move Sleep](#)



[Healthline](#)