Movement and mood

How physical activity helps mood, and a plan for building it in.

Name _____ Date _____

Regular physical activity is one of the best-supported ways to improve low mood and anxiety. It also helps sleep, energy and concentration. You do not need to become a runner. The biggest gain comes from going from nothing to something.

What counts

- Walking briskly, cycling, swimming, dancing, gardening, taking the stairs
- Anything that gets you slightly warm and slightly out of breath
- Ten minutes counts. So does five on a bad day.

Making it stick

1. **Choose something you do not hate.** Enjoyment predicts whether you will keep it up.
2. **Fix the when and where.** "After breakfast, round the park."
3. **Start below what you think you can do.** Build up slowly.
4. **Link it to people or places.** A walking partner, a class, a route you like.
5. **Track it.** A tick on the calendar is enough.

Day	What I will do	When	Done
Mon			
Tue			
Wed			
Thu			
Fri			
Sat			
Sun			

Mood before a walk or session

0 — 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7 — 8 — 9 — 10

Low Good

Mood afterwards

0 — 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7 — 8 — 9 — 10

Low Good

Check with your GP

before starting anything strenuous if you have a health condition or have not exercised in a long time.

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