

WELCOME TO

MODULE EIGHT

# *Movement & Active Living*



# Welcome

TO MODULE 6!



This week, we're going to find ways to get you moving! When you're dealing with a chronic illness, you often go through periods where you're symptom free... only to have sudden onsets of flare ups. Because of this, you may avoid exercise because it's difficult to find the motivation and energy to be active. However, keeping active can be extremely beneficial to your overall quality of life.

So, we're going to begin by learning about the concepts of natural movement and opportunistic exercise. Then we'll look at your mindset around being more active, and then some strategies for making exercise a habit and creating a plan that works for you, your lifestyle, and your chronic illness.

## NATURAL MOVEMENT & OPPORTUNISTIC EXERCISE

This is all about inviting natural movement throughout the day, without making a big fuss over it. It's about adding movement to your life that doesn't seem like "exercise."

Even small amounts of physical activity can provide positive health benefits. While regular exercise is the best way to receive the health-promoting benefits of physical activity, it can often be a challenge to make time for a lengthy workout.. or simply seem like a daunting task to find the energy to exercise through the pain and fatigue. If you can't make it into a gym or go for a walk or bike ride, that's no reason for despair.

Brief periods of physical activity throughout the day can provide numerous health benefits.



## SOME IDEAS:

- Plant & tend a garden
- Wash your own car (instead of using the car wash)
- Opt for taking the stairs whenever possible to engage in some extra cardiovascular exercise and strengthen leg muscles
- Do bicep curls with a shampoo bottle while you brush your teeth
- Choose parking spots at a distance from entrances to encourage more walking
- Do calf raises while you talk on the phone (or just walk around)
- Do some gentle seated stretches during TV commercials



## LEARNING TO LOVE MOVEMENT

Learning to love the feeling of being active, the feeling of moving your body, stretching your muscles, feeling your heart beat faster... it's definitely a sensation you can come to savor and look forward to.

But it starts with your mindset.

**What is your current belief about exercise?**

**If this is a negative thought, what's the exact opposite of that?**

**What if you were someone who loved to exercise? What would that be like?**





## TRY ON A FEW AFFIRMATIONS:

- I honor my body and my body honors me
- I love to move my body
- Exercise reenergizes my mind, body, and spirit
- I like how it feels to grow stronger every day



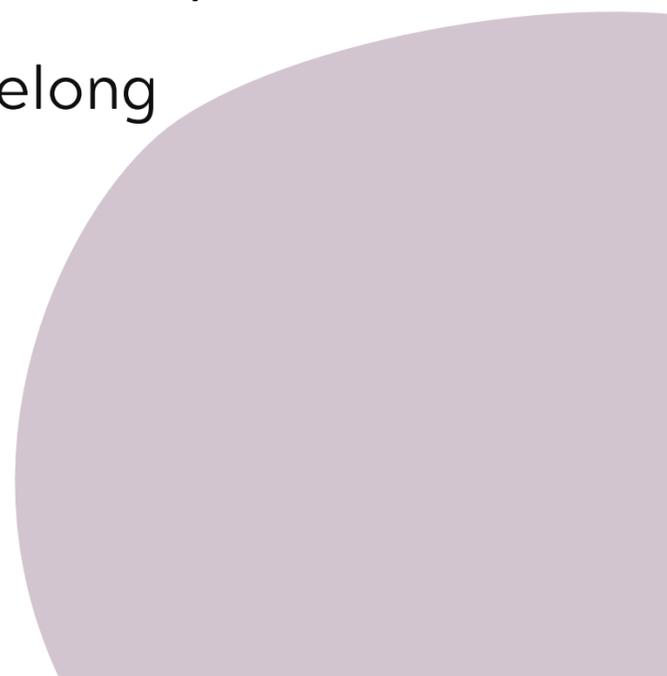


## CREATING A PERSONAL EXERCISE PLAN YOU CAN STICK TO

- 1. Clarify your goals.** Moderate low-impact exercise is all you need to improve your overall health and feel more energetic. Just start slowly with your workouts and work your way up to more challenging ones.
- 2. See your doctor if necessary.** You may want to check with your doctor before starting an exercise program. Your doctor can also help you plan a program that's safe for various conditions like heart disease or arthritis.
- 3. Take a balanced approach.** Your body may have a hard time adjusting to the workload you are putting it through. Allow yourself to get adequate rest. Remember, this is a lifelong condition that requires lifelong attention.

### QUESTION

What types of exercises would you like to include in your plan?



**4. Schedule it.** The number one reason people claim they don't exercise regularly is a lack of time. So make an appointment with yourself to get the exercise your body needs to be as healthy as it can possibly be.

## QUESTION

Let's create a simple exercise schedule. When is the best time for you to exercise each day/week?

**5. Enlist support or find a workout buddy.** The number two reason people don't exercise is boredom or loneliness. Get out there with a good friend or your significant other to help keep you accountable.

## QUESTION

Who could you ask to join you as an exercise buddy?



**6. Vary your workouts.** Guard against boredom by mixing up your activities. Visit a new yoga studio or do your tai chi outdoors when the weather is pleasant. Come up with a variety of activities.

### QUESTION

Generate a list of at least a few different exercise options that you might enjoy.

**7. Make it easy to exercise.** Driving halfway across town in rush hour traffic is enough for anyone to find an excuse to skip a day. The truth is that a health club really isn't necessary. A simple set of weights, a jump rope, or some running shoes are probably all you really need. Make it easy and fun enough to exercise that you don't have a good excuse not to head out the door.. Positivity is anti-inflammatory while dread and negativity are pro-inflammatory. Making it fun will be part of the health benefits.

### QUESTION

What's the easiest way for you to get started becoming more active?





**8. Anticipate obstacles.** Identify potential interruptions and make contingency plans. You could keep a treadmill on hand for those days when bad weather traps you indoors or take a jump rope with you when you travel. Maybe look up seated and standing yoga positions to switch it up on days where you can't find energy to get out of bed.

#### QUESTION

What obstacles might stand in your way, and how will you handle them?

**9. Track your progress.** It's a lot easier to stay interested and motivated when you can see some real progress. (See the workbook for advice on creating an exercise journal.)



**10. Reward yourself.** Celebrate your progress with rewards. Sample exotic fruits or treat yourself to a new set of walking shoes or book a massage!

## QUESTION

How will you celebrate your progress?

## THE BENEFITS OF KEEPING AN EXERCISE JOURNAL

- Increase awareness. Writing in a diary encourages mindfulness.
- Clarify goals.
- Hold yourself accountable.
- Recover from lapses.



# Homework

FOR THIS WEEK:



Begin finding ways in your day to add natural movement in.



Create a positive affirmation about exercise and add this to your journaling ritual.



Create your personal exercise plan using the steps above.



Choose a method for keeping track of your progress (an exercise journal) and begin using it.



Now that we're 8 weeks into this program, let's check back in with the goals you set at the beginning of the program. Are you feeling on track with these? Where do you need more support?