



Active Lifestyle Challenge

WEEK TWO

Building a Happy Body

Welcome to week two of the Active Lifestyle Challenge!

Included in this packet are all the resources you need for your second week.



ACTIVE LIFESTYLE CHALLENGE

Week Two Overview

Building a Happy Body

Remember to track each completed activity on your challenge tracking sheet!

Watch 'Poodle Science'

3-Minute Video

Watch Now



Read 'Build a Happy Body'

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Read 'Mindless or Mindful'

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Complete 'Mindless Movement Mini Challenge'

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Build a Happy Body



A healthy lifestyle is made up of a variety of components including proper exercise, sleep, and nutrition. Healthy physical habits can decrease stress, lower risk of disease, and increase energy. Read the six strategies below for improving physical health and identify small changes you can implement within each category. Your body will thank you later!

Get Active

Determine what kind of movement you will participate in. Will it be walking, running, playing tennis, or taking the stairs? It can be as simple as playing with your dog, or as structured as hiring a personal trainer. Whatever you choose, make it something you enjoy! When movement is fun, exercise feels less like work and more like a hobby.

Maintain Muscle

Did you know that after age 30 adults typically lose 3-8% of muscle mass each decade? Although this is the natural progression of muscle loss, this doesn't mean that you cannot work to retain and rebuild muscle mass. Maintaining muscle keeps bones strong, increases energy levels, reduces risk of injury and improves joint function.

Eat a Balanced Diet

Prioritize balance when it comes to your food intake. Improve your relationship with food by giving yourself permission to eat a variety of foods.

Rethink Habits

Now is the time to eliminate negative habits in your life. Whether it's to quit smoking or prioritize self-care, determine what habits need to be adjusted and how you will move towards a happier, healthier life.

Incorporate Stretching

Stretch each day as part of your nighttime routine. Routinely stretching is a great self-care practice and increases mobility and joint function.

Prioritize Sleep

Did you know one in three Americans report not getting enough sleep on a regular basis? Sleep is an important pillar of good health. It strengthens the immune system, enhances memory, concentration, and decision-making skills. Stick to a scheduled nighttime routine to prep your mind and body for bed. Try to unplug at least thirty minutes before you wish to fall asleep and thirty minutes after you wake up.



Mindless or Mindful?

When it comes to movement, there are benefits from both. Mindful movement allows us to check in with our bodies and get moving in a way that helps us lower stress, release stagnant energy and strengthen our mind-body connection. It's a great way to practice self-care by incorporating both mental and physical well-being. Mindless movement refers to incorporating automatic movement into the day. Move naturally by incorporating activities that you don't need to allot separate time for and can conveniently fit into your daily tasks.

Ikarians excel at making mindless movement part of their lifestyle. Rather than planning thirty minutes at the gym for exercise, they consistently move and remain active throughout the day by gardening, yard work and walking to different areas of the village. It is believed that this factor contributes to the high percentage of centenarians, (individuals who live to be 100 or older) making Ikaria, Greece a "blue zone".

Engineering more mindless movement into your life helps you improve sleep, increase productivity and enhance mental health. Consider taking the stairs, walking during your lunch break or increase the number of steps you take daily. Planning more purposeful activities into your day can be as equally rejuvenating. An evening bike ride to visit a neighbor or walking to a nearby park with your family are great places to start. Find activities that you enjoy but also serve a purpose by providing consistent, low intensity movement.

Mindful movement is listening to your body to create awareness. It helps nourish the body by stretching, strengthening and toning, or even just by paying attention and bringing awareness to how our body feels. The main objective of mindful movement is to notice the sensations of the body in motion. Active mindfulness practice brings the mind and body in union which regulates the nervous system. When we stop exercising to make our bodies look a certain way, we can start to enjoy simply moving. Intentional movement or exercise means emphasizing the self-care aspect of a regular movement practice, whether that's Pilates, running, or yoga, and it's possible with a simple mindset shift.

When you prioritize moving with the idea of taking care of yourself, rather than punishing your body, exercise is not only more enjoyable, but calms the nervous system, improves your intuition, and can help heal negative body image.

Bring mindfulness principles to any movement. Most of the research on the benefits of mindful movement examines slower-paced and more intentional movement practices like walking or yoga. However, that doesn't mean you can't bring mindfulness principles to other forms of movement like weightlifting or HIIT routines. When you are doing a certain movement, bring a sense of curiosity and nonjudgmental awareness to the movement. For example, as you are doing a weighted squat, rather than tuning out and gritting your teeth to get through the lift, notice how the squat feels throughout your entire body. No matter how it feels (easy, hard, neutral), suspend your judgment and honor that feeling for what it is today. Not only will this teach you mindfulness skills, but it will also likely help you realize when to push and when to back off, as you will be more tuned into your body's cues.

Resource
[Mindful: Getting Started with Mindful Movement](#)





Mini Challenge

Mindless Movement

Mindless movement is activity you don't need to allot separate time for and can conveniently fit into your daily tasks. Simply put, it's adding more movement into your day to create an active lifestyle. Increasing your daily activity level by creating small habits has the potential to improve overall health. Benefits include improvements in sleep, productivity, mental health and more independence or longevity in older age.

Complete five activities within each category to add more movement into your day.

At Home

- ☐ Gardening
- ☐ Turn cleaning into cardio. Add music and increase your heart rate as you work through your daily chores.
- ☐ Playing with kids or pets
- ☐ Wash your car by hand
- ☐ Put it away, don't put it down. Increase your steps with this simple tip!
- ☐ Foster a pet
- ☐ Stretch before bed
- ☐ Wake up 20 minutes earlier. Consider starting your day with a movement of your choice!

At Work

- ☐ Bike or walk to activities
- ☐ Walking meetings
- ☐ Park strategically
- ☐ Take the long way to the bathroom
- ☐ Set a timer to remind you to stand, walk or stretch at work
- ☐ Utilize a standing desk if you have one or move to the countertop
- ☐ Lunch break walk
- ☐ Take the stairs
- ☐ Swap your desk chair for an exercise ball

Helpful Tips

Bring an extra pair of shoes to the office.

Track your steps. Make a competition with yourself!





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