

## 5 Strategies to Build a Movement Mindset

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Most people are aware that physical activity is important. Not only does it reduce the risk of chronic conditions like Type 2 diabetes, heart disease and hypertension, physical activity also helps manage mental health conditions like depression and anxiety. Even though we know this, many of us still struggle to get the recommended 150 minutes a week of physical activity.

Some of the things that prevent us from doing the right amount of physical activity include: lack of time, lack of motivation, lack of equipment, or lack of education and awareness of what to do. If you have found yourself unable to be physically active due to one or more of these reasons, you are not alone!

Shifting our mindset is a powerful way to get us moving more often. Here are five strategies to reframe how you see physical activity.

- 1. Stop using the word *exercise***, unless you already LOVE to exercise. Use the word **movement** instead. Our brains are very good at searching for things that provide us pleasure and staying away from things that cause us pain. If you find yourself thinking “I don’t like exercise” try reframing and saying “I am going to **move** my body today!”
- 2. Get away from the “*all or nothing*” mentality.** Five minutes of stretching, 10 minutes of walking, and even one minute of a strength movement can be very beneficial and adds up! If you are thinking, “I don’t have time to move today,” reframe and ask yourself, “how much time can I give to my health today?”
- 3. Keep it simple.** You don’t need any fancy equipment, apps, or programs to move. Walking, jogging, riding a bicycle, using your own body weight or simply stretching in your chair are all beneficial. If you find yourself saying, “I don’t have equipment” or “I don’t have a program,” try reframing and tell yourself, “I only need my body in order to move.”
- 4. Use the Tiny Habits Method.** If you find yourself thinking, “I’m not motivated to move,” try finding small ways to stack movement into your existing activities and celebrate your wins. An example of this strategy is telling yourself: “After I wash my hands, I will do five body weight squats and celebrate by pumping my fists in the air with a hearty ‘YEAH!’” If you wash your hands five times each day, you will have done 25 air squats! You can learn more about this evidence based strategy in the [One Degree of Difference webinar recording](#).
- 5. Join us for a 21-Day Virtual Fitness Challenge.** Between July 11 and July 31, join fitness instructors from the Office of the Attorney General, the Texas Department of Public Safety, ERS, and the Texas Department of Transportation for Zumba, Strength Training, Barre, Core Flex & Stretch, Yoga and more! We will be giving away door prizes to the ten people who participate in the most classes! All classes will be offered via Zoom and are posted on the [DSHS Work Well Texas Virtual Fitness Calendar](#). Log your class participation through the [21-Day Virtual Fitness Challenge log form](#).