



FROM THE QUARTERLY PARTNERWELL PULSE REPORT

Finding Joyful Movement

Joyful movement is about shifting our mindset regarding physical exercise. The intention is to have physical movement feel positive for both our mind and body – **sparking joy, rather than being something negative.**

REFLECT

- » Take a moment to reflect on what you think of when you hear the word “exercise.”
- » Brainstorm forms of movement that you enjoy.
- » Consider what holds you back from incorporating movement into your daily routine.

MOVEMENT PROVIDES IMPORTANT BENEFITS

- » Regular exercise can strengthen the heart and improve circulation. It can reduce the risk of heart disease, lower blood pressure, and improve cholesterol.¹
- » Physical activity can reduce symptoms associated with stress, anxiety, and depression.²
- » Regular exercise can promote healthy habits such as nutrition and adequate hydration.³

CONSIDER INCORPORATING “PRINCIPLES OF JOYFUL MOVEMENT” INTO YOUR ONGOING ROUTINE:^{3,4}

- » **Pleasure:** define what type of exercise is enjoyable for you
- » **Choice:** listen to your body and make choices that feel the best for you that day
- » **Flexibility:** there is no “right” way to be active
- » **Celebration:** challenge the weight-loss mindset and focus on the benefits
- » **Intuition:** pay attention to the cues that your body is sending you before, during, and after movement

Movement comes in many forms, giving us each a variety of options to meet individual needs, lifestyles, and ability levels. Dancing, hiking, stretching, sports, yoga, walking, yardwork, strength training, swimming – the list goes on. Even Progressive Muscle Relaxation, tensing and relaxing muscles, can provide similar health benefits to exercise.⁵ Joyful movement will look different person-to-person or even day-to-day. We encourage you to find forms of movement that center around happiness and joy, which are strong motivators and promote consistency.

This material is to be used for informational purposes only and is not intended to be exhaustive, nor should any of the materials be construed as professional or medical advice.

1. American Heart Association. (2015). “The Benefits of Physical Activity.”

2. Mayo Clinic. (2021). “Exercise and Stress: Get Moving to Manage Stress.”

3. Colorado State University, Kendall Reagan Nutrition Center. (n.d.). How to find joy in exercise. College of Health and Human Sciences. How to Find Joy in Exercise

4. Bacon, L. (2010). Health at every size: The surprising truth about your weight. BenBellaBooks.

5. Li Y, Wang R, Tang J, et al. Progressive muscle relaxation improves anxiety and depression of pulmonary arterial hypertension patients. Evid Based Complementary Alternative Med. 2015; 2015: article ID 792895.