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The Importance of Getting Active & Staying Active for a healthy body & mind



MY WELLNESS TRANSITION
EMPOWERING YOU ON YOUR WELLNESS JOURNEY



Why do we need to be active?



"What do you think of when a person says..."



"Exercise"



"Getting Active"



"Getting Fit"



"Boot Camp"

Do you.....

- Break out in a cold sweat?
- Internally groan and think of torture?
- Feel Overwhelmed?

Or

- Love the Idea?
- Can't wait to get stuck in?
- Feel Motivated?

Do you consider the following to be exercise?



- Walk or run after a bus, go up and down stairs or hills to get to and from places
- Lift boxes or babies & children
- Push or pull open doors or move furniture from one place to another
- Drag heavy bags of wood or soil from one place to another
- Stretch up to get something on a high shelf
- Bend down to put on socks or shoes.
- Get out of the way if an object or person is moving quickly towards us
- Catch something falling before it breaks

Our bodies are designed to move & be active



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Before the invention of cars and electricity, we had to:



Walk, run, lift, drag, pull and push everything



This type of movement is called **functional exercise or movement**



Our modern world has made many of these movements obsolete



We need to exercise to keep our muscles and joints strong, so we can continue doing these movements and keep our flexibility as we age



It will also keep living healthier and more independent lives

Getting Active for Physical Health

Health Perspective: We need to work our heart and lungs so they can pump blood, oxygen and nutrients around our body and remove waste products from the liver, kidneys and lungs

The fitter our heart and lungs are, the less likely we are to suffer Type II Diabetes, Cardiovascular disease, Hypertension, Stroke & Alzheimer's disease

Functional exercise perspective: we need Cardiovascular fitness & endurance, so we are able burst into a run or fast walk to get away from something or stop a child running across the road

Getting Active for Physical Health



When muscles contract and relax, they pull on our joints and skeleton which allows our body to move and resist force

Health Perspective: The stronger and fitter our muscles, the stronger our bones become and the less likely we are to injure ourselves. Muscles help keep us upright (posture), and burn excess glucose (helps with weight maintenance)

Functional Exercise Perspective: We need muscular endurance to allow us to keep doing a movement for a long period of time before fatiguing, (sweeping, hoovering, painting, sitting, standing, digging and hammering)

We need muscular strength to be able to help us lift heavy objects, carry shopping or children, change bedding, push against a very heavy door, drag heavy bags of potatoes, flour, wood or compost

Getting Active for Mental Health



Being Active induces beneficial responses in the brain

Being active increases levels of **brain-derived neurotrophic factor**

BDNF increases the ability of the brain to adapt, repair itself, make new brain cells and is anti-inflammatory

Exercise improves: Cognitive Function

Increases blood flow bringing essential nutrients

Increases waste disposal of toxins from the brain

Helps in the alleviation of depression and anxiety by releasing endorphins

The Importance of Getting Active

1

Identify what your barriers are and ask for help

2

**Invest in good rain gear and shoes.
They will serve you well in Ireland**

3

Use friends, partners, family, dogs, nature, changing seasons, online classes, YouTube, podcasts, music

Use whatever you need to get you up off the sofa and moving, breathing and stretching



Where to start



Head outside and walk by the canal, lakes, forest paths



Be fully present & breathe



Listen to the birds, the wind in the trees, look at all the different colours



Connect with Nature



Getting Active



Rent a bicycle and cycle the greenway or royal canal with friends, family or other social clubs like the Women or Mens Sheds



Join a fun exercise class that you will look forward to



Take up social dancing



Swimming in the local pool or lakes (many groups meet up and do this)



Join a walking club



Get out gardening



The Importance of Staying Active

In your everyday movement, approach cleaning the house as an exercise class. Put on your favourite music fairly loud and sweep, Hoover, scrub and change bed linen

This is functional movement and demands CV fitness, muscular strength & endurance and flexibility

When shopping, try and carry heavy bags for a little longer if you can. If not carrying something heavy, park at the other end of the town and walk as fast as you can to the shops and back

Do the same if you're meeting someone for coffee

The Importance of Staying Active

Some of us love exercise and really feel the benefit physically and mentally. Some of us hate it

If you can reframe exercise as functional movement and remind yourself, you are doing this to keep you as independent and healthy for as long as possible