

# Be Active

# Five Ways to Wellbeing



NEW  
**ECONOMICS  
FOUNDATION**  
Foresight

## in a recovery context

Everyone knows that exercise is good for our bodies and physical health.

In addition to weight control, exercise improves and maintains overall health by supporting the immune system. Weight-bearing exercises keeps bones strong and aerobic exercises strengthens the heart and lungs.

But did you know that exercise is also good for our mental health? One of the best things about exercising for mental health is that anyone can do it, so long as they respect their individual circumstances.

## **Regular participation in exercise has shown to have significant benefits on our health. Benefits include:**

- Enhanced mental health and well-being.
- Improved physical health.
- Reduced symptoms of anxiety and depression.
- Improved self-esteem and confidence.
- Reduced risk of developing serious physical health conditions (including cardiovascular disease, diabetes and cancer).
- Healthy weight loss.
- Provides a positive focus and sense of purpose – a key element in combating depression.
- Encourages social inclusion.
- Reduced feelings of anger and frustration.
- Enhanced concentration and sleeping patterns.

Before we begin to train the body, we have to train the mind.

You want to get fit. But do you know why? *List as many reasons as you can.*

Whatever it is that drives you, motivation matters as your willingness to engage with exercise will only ever be as strong as that motivation.

## Consider the following questions:

- What do you think the results of exercising your mind and body will be?
- How much do you value those results?
- How do you feel about doing it (confident, embarrassed, frightened, determined)?
- What do others think about it, and do they influence you?
- How easy do you think it will be to regularly train the body and mind for a short time?
- How much control do you have over your ability to make that happen?

*What are the some of the common barriers to doing exercise?*

- Cost
- Safety considerations
- Lack of time
- Non-enjoyment
- Lack of motivation
- Overly self-conscious/embarrassed to exercise
- Poor body image
- Lack of energy
- Fear of injury
- No exercise partner
- Little support to exercise

Look at the above reasons. Which if any apply to you? Are there other factors which are making it difficult to exercise? What can you do to overcome these?



We need to change the way we view physical activity, not to see it as something 'we have to do', 'should do' or 'ought to do' for our health, but as something that we do because we personally value its positive benefits to our wellbeing.

*“I should do some exercise.”*

**Reframe the way you conceive doing exercise.**

# Exercise benefits statements

My mood is improved with exercise.

Exercise improves my self-esteem.

Exercising makes me feel relaxed.

Exercising is a good way for me to meet people.

Exercise helps me sleep better at night.

Exercise helps me decrease fatigue

Now come up with some exercise benefit statements of your own!

## ATHLETE PROFILE

### MOTIVATION

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### BARRIERS / FRUSTRATIONS

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## ATHLETE PROFILE

## GOALS / OPPORTUNITIES

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## BEHAVIOUR

UNMOTIVATED

MOTIVATED

INACTIVE

ACTIVE

BEGINNER

ADVANCED

SOLO

GROUPS

HARD WORK

FUN

SPONTANEOUS

PLANNED

James Clear

Identity is a powerful motivator.

Your current behaviours are simply a reflection of your current **identity**. To change your behaviour, you need to start believing new things about yourself and incorporate it into your sense of self.

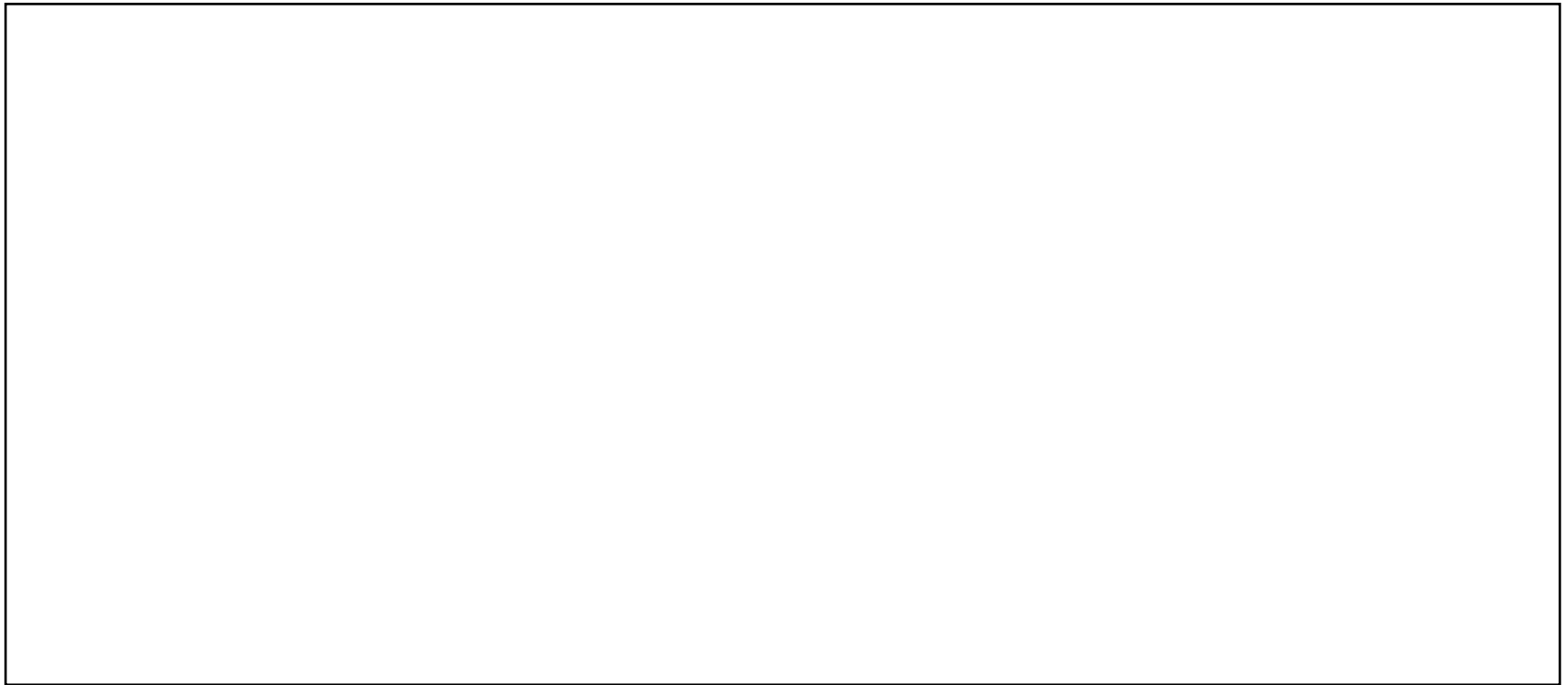
Changing your beliefs involves two steps.

1. Decide the type of person you want to be.
2. Prove it to yourself with small wins.

For example, if you want to be a runner, start calling yourself a runner.

# Look to the future

Imagine you have become more active; how would you feel?  
What would you be doing differently than you aren't doing now?  
What would you be doing less off? What would you say to  
yourself? What would others notice about you that is different?



- Stay active, at a level that is right for you – listen to your body, start slowly and build gradually.
- Train the mind. Tell yourself you are the type of person that is active. Look for small wins to build the evidence base.
- Enlist support. Get an accountability-buddy.
- Devise a way of self-monitoring your progress to keep you on track i.e., exercise journal, wall planner.
- Create a vision board. Put it somewhere you can see it everyday.
- Reward progress by reinforcing the behaviour. For example, if I complete a 5km run, then I will buy myself a new running top.

“EXCUSES  
DON'T  
GET  
RESULTS.”

# 50 REASONS to exercise

01. Lifts your mood
02. Improves learning abilities
03. Builds self-esteem
04. Keeps your brain fit
05. Keeps your body fit & able
06. Boosts mental health
07. Boosts your immune system
08. Reduces stress
09. Makes you feel happier
10. Has anti-ageing effects
11. Improves skin tone and colour
12. Improves sleeping patterns
13. Helps prevent strokes
14. Improves joint function
15. Improves muscle strength
16. Alleviates anxiety
17. Sharpens memory
18. Helps to control addictions
19. Boosts productivity
20. Boosts creative thinking
21. Improves body image
22. Gives you confidence
23. Helps you keep focused in life
24. Improves eating habits
25. Increases longevity
26. Strengthens your bones
27. Strengthens your heart
28. Improves posture
29. Prevents colds
30. Improves appetite
31. Improves cholesterol levels
32. Lowers risk of (certain) cancers
33. Lowers high blood pressure
34. Lowers risk of diabetes
35. Fights dementia
36. Eases back pain
37. Decreases osteoporosis risk
38. Reduces feelings of depression
39. Prevents muscle loss
40. Increases energy and endurance
41. Increases sports performance
42. Increases pain resistance
43. Improves balance and coordination
44. Improves oxygen supply to cells
45. Improves concentration
46. Helps with self-control
47. Lessens fatigue
48. Increases sex drive & satisfaction
49. Makes life more exciting
50. Improves Quality of Life



YOU'RE ONLY  
ONE WORKOUT  
AWAY FROM A  
GOOD MOOD

it doesn't  
matter what  
others are doing.  
it matters what  
YOU are doing.

3 MONTHS  
FROM NOW,  
YOU WILL  
THANK  
YOURSELF.