

life lines

information for your life

**SPRING
ISSUE**

2019



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GET PAST YOUR EXERCISE ROADBLOCKS



Trackers can help you set goals and monitor progress. You wear most of these devices on your wrist like a watch, or clipped to your clothing.

You most likely will face roadblocks that keep you from meeting your physical activity goals. Think about what keeps you from being active, then try to come up with creative ways to address those roadblocks. Here are a few examples to help you get started.

Barrier	Solution
I don't have enough time.	Instead of doing one long workout session, build in three 10-minute bursts of activity during your day, such as a brisk walk. Even standing up instead of sitting at your desk has benefits.
I just don't like exercise.	Good news! You don't have to run a marathon or go to the gym all the time to benefit from being active. To make physical activity more fun, try something you enjoy doing, such as dancing to the radio or taking a yoga class with friends. Many people find they start to like exercise better the more they do it.
I'm worried about my health or getting hurt.	If you have a hard time being active because of your health, talk with a health care professional first. A certified fitness professional can also guide you on how to be active safely.
I feel self-conscious working out in front of others.	Start being active at home until you feel more confident. Be active with friends who will support and encourage you.

How can I stick with my physical activity plan?

Sticking with a plan to be physically active can be a challenge. Online tools such as meal trackers and the NIH Body Weight Planner (<https://www.niddk.nih.gov/health-information/weight-management/body-weight-planner>) can help. The NIH Body Weight Planner lets you make personalized calorie and physical activity plans to reach specific goals within a specific time period.

Devices you can wear, such as pedometers and fitness trackers, may help you count steps, calories, and minutes of physical activity. Trackers can help you set goals and monitor progress. You wear most of these devices on your wrist like a watch, or clipped to your clothing.

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GET PAST YOUR EXERCISE ROADBLOCKS

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You also can download fitness apps that let you enter information to track your progress using a computer or smartphone or other mobile device. Keeping an activity journal is another good way to help you stay motivated and on track to reach your fitness goals.

Set goals

As you track your activity, try to set specific short- and long-term goals. For example, instead of "I will be more active," set a goal such as "I will take a walk after lunch at least two days a week." Getting started with a doable goal is a good way to form a new habit. A short-term goal may be to walk 5 to 10 minutes, 5 days a week. A long-term goal may be to do at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity on most days of the week.

Get support

Ask a family member or friend to be active with you. Your workout buddy can help make your activities more fun and can cheer you on and help you meet your goals.

Track progress

You may not feel as though you are making progress, but when you look back at where you started, you may be pleasantly surprised. Making regular activity part of your life is a big step. Start slowly, and praise yourself for every goal you set and achieve.

Review your goals

Did you meet your goals? If not, why? Are they doable? Did you hit a roadblock trying to meet your goal? What will you do differently next week? Brainstorm some options to overcome future roadblocks. Ask a friend or family member to help support your goals.

Pick nonfood rewards

Whether your goal is to be active 15 minutes a day, to walk farther than you did last week, or simply to stay positive, recognizing your efforts is an important part of staying on track. Decide how you will reward yourself. Some ideas for rewards include getting new music to charge you up or buying new workout gear.

Be patient with yourself

Don't get discouraged if you have setbacks from time to time. If you can't achieve your goal the first time or can only stick to your goals for part of the week, remind yourself that this is all part of establishing new habits.

Look ahead

Try to focus on what you will do differently moving forward, rather than on what went wrong. Pat yourself on the back for trying.

Most importantly, don't give up. Any movement, even for a short time, is a good thing. Each activity you add to your life is another step toward a healthier you.

U.S. National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK). (2016, July). How can I get past my roadblocks? In *Staying active at any size*. Retrieved July 3, 2018, from <https://www.niddk.nih.gov/>

PROVIDING CARE TO OLDER ADULTS

Where to Find Help in Your Community: The task of caring for an older family member can be overwhelming, but you don't need to do it alone. There may be a variety of resources you can access in your community to provide you help and support. Every caregiving situation is different, so it is important to access the types of support that are right for you and your family. Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can provide you with resources and referrals.

In-Home Supportive Services: There are many in-home services that can help older adults stay in their own homes or in the homes of family members. Meals-on-Wheels (<http://www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/>) programs, transportation services, friendly visitors, and access to home adaptive equipment can usually be found at no or low cost to the family. Adult day programs and senior centers can also provide daytime support for older family members of working caregivers. In-home care agencies can provide visiting nurses, caregivers, and respite services for a fee. Check your local phone book under *aging, elderly, or human services* for information on programs and services available in your elder's area. You can also contact the Area Agency on Aging office nearest you. It can provide referrals to local resources that may be appropriate for the needs of your family.

Placement Options: Independent living communities, assisted living facilities, board and care homes (also known as *residential care or adult foster care*), and skilled nursing facilities are examples of placement options. Most residential options will require an assessment of the older person prior to admission, in order to determine the level of care needed. Fees and payment sources for residential services vary greatly.

Geriatric Care Managers: *Geriatric care managers* provide assessments and offer information to families who are caring for older relatives. A geriatric care manager can assist a family in determining which resources and services are most appropriate for a senior adult, and can help the family locate the services in the senior's area. Geriatric care managers are available in most communities and generally charge for their services.

Caregiver Support: Caregiver support groups can be found at many local hospitals and senior care facilities. Senior centers may also have information on local support groups. Informal networks made up of family and friends can also provide caregivers with needed support.

Legal and Financial Issues: It is important to review any existing financial and legal documents carefully. Wills, trusts, powers of attorney, and advance directives should all be kept up-to-date. A responsible caregiver needs to know where these documents are and have access to them if needed.

The Social Security Administration (<http://www.ssa.gov/>) can answer questions in regard to benefits, and can automatically deposit payments into the bank accounts of seniors. Medicare (<http://www.medicare.gov>) can provide information on what services, procedures, and medications are covered by a Medicare policy.

Legal assistance is often available through community agencies. The National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys (<http://www.naela.org/>) maintains a database of attorneys specializing in elder law issues.

Workplace Options. (Reviewed 2017). *Providing care to older adults*. Raleigh, NC: Author.





FORGIVENESS: THE POSITIVE EFFECTS

You can forgive and still understand that the pain of the other person may be so great that it will continue to leak onto those in the vicinity in the form of hurtful behavior.

What is forgiveness?

Forgiveness is the process of letting go of hurt, resentment, sadness, anger, hate, a desire for retaliation, and a whole host of negative feelings that are associated with hurtful behavior that has been directed at you, someone you care about, or humanity as a whole. Forgiveness is releasing the burden of past pain. The key point to remember about forgiveness is that it is something you do for yourself and for your own wellbeing.

What Forgiveness Is Not

Forgiveness is not forgetting or denial of wrong action. As a matter of fact, the first step in forgiveness is to acknowledge the fact that you or someone you care about has been hurt by another person.

- Forgiveness is not rationalizing or excusing misbehavior.
- Forgiveness does not give permission for future misbehavior.
- Forgiveness does not require that you continue to be involved with the person who hurt you. You can forgive and still understand that the pain of the other person may be so great that it will continue to leak onto those in the vicinity in the form of hurtful behavior. Self-protection or keeping a distance may be required.

The Value of Forgiveness

Nelson Mandela said, "Hating someone is drinking poison and expecting the other

person to die from it." This quote introduces you to the importance of forgiveness in living a resilient and happy life. Forgiveness keeps you from poisoning yourself with anger, hate, and resentment. There is substantial scientific research supporting the positive health effects of forgiveness. The process of forgiveness has been shown to result in reduced blood pressure and heart rate, lower anxiety, and a reduction in depression.

Beliefs Interfering With Forgiveness

Which of these statements describe your beliefs about forgiving someone who has hurt you?

- The hurt was so great, how can I possibly forgive?
- There are some things that can never be forgiven.
- She doesn't deserve to be forgiven.
- Why should I forgive? What he did was wrong.
- She has to pay for what she did.
- He'll suffer if I withhold forgiveness.
- If I don't retaliate, she'll (I'll) think I'm weak.
- Continuing to judge him makes me feel like I'm a better person than he is.
- Why should I show compassion for her? She certainly didn't care about how I felt.

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FORGIVENESS: THE POSITIVE EFFECTS

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Meanness is pain in disguise.

The Key to Forgiveness: Compassion

Philo of Alexandria said, "Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a great battle." This quote provides you with the key to forgiveness, which is compassion. Forgiveness is possible when you understand that when a person behaves badly, that behavior is the person's own suffering leaking into the world, onto you, and onto other people in the form of negative behavior. When people behave badly toward you, you can be certain that the behavior is not about you, but a reflection of their overall approach to life and the degree of their pain and unhappiness, no matter what they would like you to believe about their behavior.

Forgiveness takes effort.

Mignon McLaughlin said, "What we forgive too freely doesn't stay forgiven." You must start slowly. Don't make a list of all of the hurt, anger, and resentment you carry that is currently poisoning you. The most difficult step in practicing forgiveness is learning to see the pain behind another's misbehavior. This takes practice, as with any effort at developing new skills and habits. You will want to start slowly. The first step in learning forgiveness is to start with the practice of compassion, which, as said above, is the key to forgiveness. Part of compassion is to learn to see that everyone is swimming in the same soup.

Practice forgiveness.

Philo of Alexandria said that "everyone we meet is fighting a great battle." That means that you will have ample opportunity to practice forgiveness: There is lots of pain leaking into the world, whether it be in the form of rudeness or thoughtlessness, or in the form of more significant misbehavior such as abuse and violence.

Here are some tips to begin practicing forgiveness:

- Identify feelings you have toward other people that are poisoning you with hatred, resentment, hurt, and the rest of the negative emotions that keep you stuck in the past and from which you need to heal. Forgiveness is about creating a new future free of this pain.
- Pick one person and identify the hurtful behavior you'd like to forgive. Start small, with a minor misbehavior that you'd like to stop carrying around with you.
- Remind yourself that other people's hurtful behavior is their pain (their "great battle") in disguise. If you can, try to understand what that pain is.
- Determine whether the goal is simply forgiveness, or forgiveness and reconciliation (restoring the relationship). Remember that reconciliation requires more than forgiveness. It requires three things of the other person. Consider reconciliation to be your goal only if the following are true:
 1. The individual acknowledges the misbehavior and apologizes. It's important to understand that an apology is not about past behavior; it's really a promise about future behavior. It's a promise not to do it again. Repeated apologies about the same behavior are nothing more than broken promises and don't need to be taken seriously.
 2. The individual asks for forgiveness.
 3. The individual does not repeat the behavior.

Defense Centers of Excellence, National Center for Telehealth & Technology, Afterdeployment. (2010). *Forgiveness*. Retrieved January 12, 2018, from <http://afterdeployment.dcoe.mil/>

TIPS FOR PARENTS: BE ACTIVE AND HAVE FUN

Be active with your family each day. Here are some tips to fit physical activity into a busy week and make it fun!



Find the best times to be active.

- Keep track of how your family members spend their time for one week.
- Find two 30-minute time slots when your family could fit in physical activity.
 - Choose times when your family is usually together to try an activity.
 - Choose times when you usually have a lot of energy.

Start small.

- Take a walk or play tag with your children.
- Walk to work, school, or a friend's house.
- Use chores to move more. You can burn calories while you vacuum, rake leaves, or scrub floors.
- Ask your family to start a new routine or activity.

Start with what you know.

- Do things you know how to do, such as riding a bike or dancing.
- Pick activities that don't need any costly sports gear, like jogging, doing push-ups, or tossing a ball.
- Get active at home, in your neighborhood, or in the park.
 - Remember, you don't need to go to a gym.
 - You can try active video games where you and your kids can dance or run in place.

Be active together.

- Play with your kids, or let them join you for an exercise video or fitness game.

- Set up a birthday party or other social event that gets people moving, like dancing or having a jump-rope contest.
- Exercise with friends.

Try new things.

- Ask a friend to teach you a sport or active game.
- Take a dance or sports class, and sign your kids up for a class too.

Get support.

- Find free or low-cost programs to help you and your family move more, such as
 - Parks and recreation or YMCA programs
 - After-school programs
 - Exercise classes at work
- Tell friends and family that you are trying to move more. Ask them to support your efforts.
- If your family does not want to be active, try these ideas:
 - Tell them physical activity will help make their bodies strong and healthy.
 - Lead by example. When they see you having fun, they will want to join in.
 - Tell them being active will give them more energy. Ask them to try it for two or three weeks and see how they feel.
 - Have children choose fun ways to get moving.

U.S. National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. (n.d.). *Parent tips: Be active and have fun*. Retrieved January 29, 2018, from <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov>