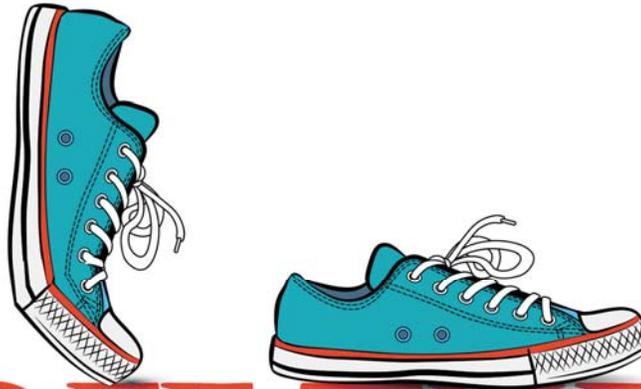


Here are some blank forms to use if you purchased the eBook, or if you wrote in your book and want to start over.

(The book is available in paperback and eBook editions from [Amazon](#), [Barnes & Noble](#) and many other online retailers.)



# OFF THE COUCH

*How to Find Joy Through Physical  
Activity Even If You Hate to Exercise*



Melissa Wogahn, MA

## *My Active-Living Vision*

This vision is a statement about who you are and what you want to do consistently to support your best active self. The following are some questions to help you in the process of coming to your own mission statement.

- The things I want to do to be active are:
  
- The reasons I want to be active are:
  
- The things that I really value and want to incorporate into my life are:
  
- My past positive experiences with being active include:
  
- My challenges to living an active life include:
  
- I plan to use the following support systems when I am feeling overwhelmed, tired, and unfocused:

- My strengths that I can draw upon to overcome these challenges include:
- I will use the following tactics when I find myself feeling impatient:
- On a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being extremely confident, I feel \_\_\_\_\_ confident in being able to realize my active-living vision.
- What would make my vision one number higher on the scale?

## *Stage 1: Pre Contemplation*

### **Raise Your Pros!**

#### **A “Not Even Close to Thinking About It” Activity**

Help yourself become friendly with the wondrous benefits of physical activity. Below are reasons to get moving. Which reasons feel good for you? Check off those that spark your interest. The more reasons you have to begin, the easier it will be to get moving. Enjoy this exercise.

#### **Physical Health**

- Helps manage weight
- Helps lose weight (with calorie reduction)
- Helps improve heart lung and muscle fitness
- Helps to raise “good” HDL cholesterol
- Helps to decrease risk of clogged blood vessels
- Helps lower resting heart rate
- Helps to decrease irregular heart rhythms
- Helps improve circulation
- Helps to improve immune function
- Helps immune system work better
- Helps the body use insulin better
- Helps to strengthens joints
- Helps to strengthens bones
- Helps improves cardiovascular function
- Helps to decrease risk of many illnesses, including diabetes, depression and stroke and heart disease
- Helps to improve balance
- Helps to improve posture

#### **Intellectual Health**

- You will feel less nervous or anxious
- You will feel more alert
- You will improve your memory
- You will experience decreased depressive thoughts
- You will better able to handle stress

- You will feel less anger
- You will be easier to be around
- You will experience less tension headaches
- You will feel less muscle tension

### Emotional Health

- You will feel better about yourself
- You will like yourself more
- You will like others more
- You will begin to see possibilities
- You will learn how to tap into who you are inside
- You will learn what works and doesn't work for you
- You feel better about saying "no"
- You will no longer worry about what others think
- You will be easier to be around
- You will have a more positive outlook on life
- You will feel successful!

Now it's your turn. Think of reasons to get active versus reasons to stay sedentary.

REASONS TO...	
GET ACTIVE	STAY THE SAME
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

Which list is longest? Your answer will give an idea of how ready you are to change.

## Stage 2: Contemplation

“I May Get Active”

Overcome Your Barriers!

A “Starting to Think About Maybe Doing Something” Activity

Complete the “Raise Your Pros” activity. Becoming more aware of what your “pros” to activity are will help overcome your barriers.

YOUR TOP 5 BARRIERS TO EXERCISE	YOUR TOP 5 SOLUTIONS
Example: I don't have time	I can walk for 15 minutes during my lunch hour on Monday, Wednesday and Friday
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

One helpful thought to keep in mind is that many little bits of activity add up to a lot. If you can't figure out how to walk for forty-five minutes, try adding little bits during the day. This tip can apply to activities other than walking, too.

## *Stage 3: Preparation or "I Will"*

### **Prepare to Move! An "I Am Going to Do This" Activity**

My Action Plan
Start Date:
Days of the week I will exercise:

	<b>Time of Day</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Backup Plan</b>
<b>MON</b>					
<b>TUE</b>					
<b>WED</b>					
<b>THU</b>					
<b>FRI</b>					
<b>SAT</b>					
<b>SUN</b>					

- Things I need to do to get started (i.e., check out local gyms, choose a class, map out walking route, etc.):
- What I need to buy before starting (i.e., shoes, activity monitor, hat, mP3 player, etc.):

- Other steps I can take to prepare: (schedule babysitter, plan meals for dinner, pack my lunch for work):

*Helpful Thoughts:*

- › If I find myself feeling too tired, I will remember how much more energy I will have after I exercise.
- › If I am feeling too stressed out to exercise, I will look at my exercise time as a mental vacation.
- › If I am feeling too busy to exercise, I will remember my new way of thinking of exercise as a vital part of a healthy and busy life.

## Stage 4: I Am Active

**Action!**  
**I am Doing This Activity!**

### Conscious Actions

	<b>Conscious Action Examples:</b>
<b>MORNING</b>	Get up 20 minutes early and go for a walk and have my clothes where they are easy to put on; go to the gym before work, pack my gym bag the night before.
<b>NOONTIME</b>	Go for a 20-minute walk at my lunch hour, which still leaves me time to eat my pre-planned healthy lunch; take a noontime fitness class with my already-packed gym bag ready to go; start a walking club at work.
<b>EVENING</b>	Go to the gym before I get home from work; go for a walk at a park on my way home from work; go for a bike ride with my neighbor after work; go to a yoga class on my way home from work.

<b>Conscious Action Examples:</b>	
<b>WEEKENDS</b>	Participate in family activities like going for a hike or a bike ride; join a singles hiking group for weekend hikes.
<b>SOCIAL SITUATIONS</b>	Plan ahead by eating before going to a party; drink plenty of water during the event; bring healthy food choices to a potluck event; make sure I get my walk in before going to the event.

- Now it is your turn. List the potential times you can fit any sort of activity into your life, along with any situations that may present challenges to your intended goals.
  
- How does exercise help you reach your goals?
  
- What unexpected situations can get you off track?
  
- How will you handle them?

<b>Conscious Action Examples:</b>	
<b>MORNING</b>	
<b>NOONTIME</b>	
<b>EVENING</b>	
<b>WEEKENDS</b>	
<b>SOCIAL SITUATIONS</b>	

## *Stage 5: I Am Still Active*

### **Maintenance Stage An "I Am Still Doing This!" Activity**

- My top three physical activities:
- On a typical day, here is how I feel before my workout:
- On a typical day, here is how I feel during my workout:
- On a typical day, here is how I feel after my workout:
- What can I do, if anything, to help me stay motivated to continue with my plan?
- What are some activities that I want to try?
- What are some upcoming events that I would like to participate in?
- How can I best prepare for these events?

## *Tips for the Discouraged or Impatient Thinkers*

- Take a deep breath. This helps create perspective.
- Recognize your successes so far. This helps build a sense of separation from where you began and a sense of realizing that you are doing more than you had been doing.
- Remember that it takes a long time to change. This is normal! Show yourself some love and accept yourself for your efforts thus far.
- Go for a walk! Even a fifteen minute walk can help break negative thought patterns.
- Remember that there is always more than one way to look at a situation—a positive way and a negative way. You have control over which one you choose.
- Give yourself a chance to get over the humps and bumps along the way toward your more active life. Change is never a straight shot!
- Remember, anything you do is better than nothing at all.
- Call a friend.
- Volunteer for an organization you feel strongly about. One of the best ways to change how we feel about ourselves is to give to others.
- Clean house. I know that sounds ridiculous, but many of my clients have stated that it gets their mind off of things, gets them moving and allows them to feel a sense of accomplishment. One client remarked that she puts on her favorite music with her headphones and goes into “la-la land.” (Her words, not mine!) This is a great example of finding what works for YOU.

Write down three things you can do when feeling discouraged or impatient:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

*You can't change who you are, but you can change what you have in your head, you can refresh what you're thinking about, you can put some fresh air in your brain.*

—Ernesto Bertarelli

## *Early Stage Goals*

(Thinking/Feeling Goals)

### **Acquiring Information—Let's Learn!**

Examples of these types of goals all serve to increase your awareness of changes you want to make.

Make a list of activities you can start doing now to get warmed up to the idea of physical activity:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Here are some examples:

1. Checking out my city's online map of walking paths.
2. Reading my local recreation department catalog list of exercise classes.
3. Watching a documentary about the food industry and how it affects our perceptions (refer to resource page for suggestions).
4. Reading about other people who have learned how to live an active life.
5. Noticing how I relate to others when I don't feel so good about myself.
6. Buying a magazine on healthy cooking.
7. Taking a free education class offered through my local hospital.
8. Downloading apps to my phone relating to activity and nutrition.

Be creative. And you don't have to come up with these goals at one time. Let the notion sit with you for a few days and see what you come up with.

## Smart Goals

Smart goals can be tied to thinking or action-based goals. For example, if you are thinking of getting more active in the next six months, here are examples of smart goals that can help you begin thinking actively:

- On Thursday, I will make a list of the five top reasons to get active for next week.
- I will research healthy cooking recipe books on Saturday and make a list of my top three choices.
- On Wednesday at my lunch hour, I will check out a documentary about the food industry at my library and watch it that night.
- On Saturday, I will research books on diet, health, and exercise and choose one to purchase.

Here are five SMART goals that I can start doing right now:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Smart goals can also be action-based. Here are some examples:

- I will walk for twenty minutes during my lunch hour on Tuesday and Thursday.
- I will get up twenty minutes earlier and walk before I have coffee on Monday and Wednesday.
- On Friday, I will walk with my neighbor at 3:00 p.m. for forty-five minutes.

If you are ready for action, make a list of five action goals written using the smart goal platform:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

*What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what you become by achieving your goals.*

—Henry David Thoreau

## Mindfulness Activity

### Tuning In vs. Tuning Out

TOOLS OF DISTRACTION EXAMPLES	TOOLS OF MINDFULNESS EXAMPLES
MP3 player	Noticing the environment
Audio books	Noticing the weather
Podcasts	Noticing sounds
Walking with friends	Noticing how I feel
Taking a group exercise class	Noticing my breathing

Now it's your turn.

Here are some ways I can use distraction when I don't feel like exercising:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Here are some ways I can tune into myself and learn the art of mindfulness and not judge myself as I learn to become more physically active:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Here is another exercise to help bring attention to the present moment: On my walk today, here is what I noticed:

During my drive to work today, I noticed the following:

While on my lunch hour, I took a five-minute break to focus on my breathing. Here is what I felt:

When I got home from work and did not want to go for a walk, here is how I did it anyway:

## Activity Style Assessment

### LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Activity	No Way	Don't Think So	Perhaps	Willing To Try
Bocce Ball				
Bowling				
Gardening				
Hiking				
Horseshoes				
Walking				

### GROUP/SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Activity	No Way	Don't Think So	Perhaps	Willing To Try
Badminton				
Ballroom Dance				
Bicycling				
Boxing				
Circuit Training				
Contra Dance				
Cross Fit				
Fencing				
Frisbee				
Frisbee Golf				
Golf				
Hiking				
Jazzercise				
Jogging				
Modern Dance				
Pilates				
Running				
Skateboard				

### GROUP/SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

Activity	No Way	Don't Think So	Perhaps	Willing To Try
Square Dance				
Stroller Strides				
Walking				
Weight Lifting				
Yoga				
Zumba				

### SOLO ACTIVITIES

Activity	No Way	Don't Think So	Perhaps	Willing To Try
Bicycling				
Dancing at Home With No One Watching				
Elliptical				
Hiking				
Jogging				
Jump Rope				
Running				
Skateboard				
Stationary Bike				
Treadmill				
Walking				
Weight Lifting				

### TEAM ACTIVITIES

Activity	No Way	Don't Think So	Perhaps	Willing To Try
Baseball/Softball				
Basketball				
Beach Volleyball				
Dodgeball				
Field Hockey				
Handball				

### TEAM ACTIVITIES

Activity	No Way	Don't Think So	Perhaps	Willing To Try
Hockey				
Kickball				
Pickle ball				
Racquetball				
Squash				
Table Tennis				
Tennis				
Volleyball				

### WATER ACTIVITIES

Activity	No Way	Don't Think So	Perhaps	Willing To Try
Aqua Jogging				
Boogie Board				
Canoeing				
Kayaking				
Stand Up Paddleboard				
Surfing				
Swimming				
Synchronized Swimming				
Water Aerobics				
Water Polo				

### DANCE ACTIVITIES

Activity	No Way	Don't Think So	Perhaps	Willing To Try
Ballet				
Ballroom Dance				
Contra Dance				
Dancing at Home With No One Watching				
Jazz Dance				
Modern Dance				

### DANCE ACTIVITIES

Activity	No Way	Don't Think So	Perhaps	Willing To Try
Square Dance				
Jazzercise				
Zumba				

### COLD WEATHER ACTIVITIES

Activity	No Way	Don't Think So	Perhaps	Willing To Try
Cross Country Skiing				
Downhill skiing				
Ice Skating				
Snow Shoeing				

### MARTIAL ARTS ACTIVITIES

Activity	No Way	Don't Think So	Perhaps	Willing To Try
Judo				
Jujitsu				
Karate				
Kickboxing				
Taekwondo				